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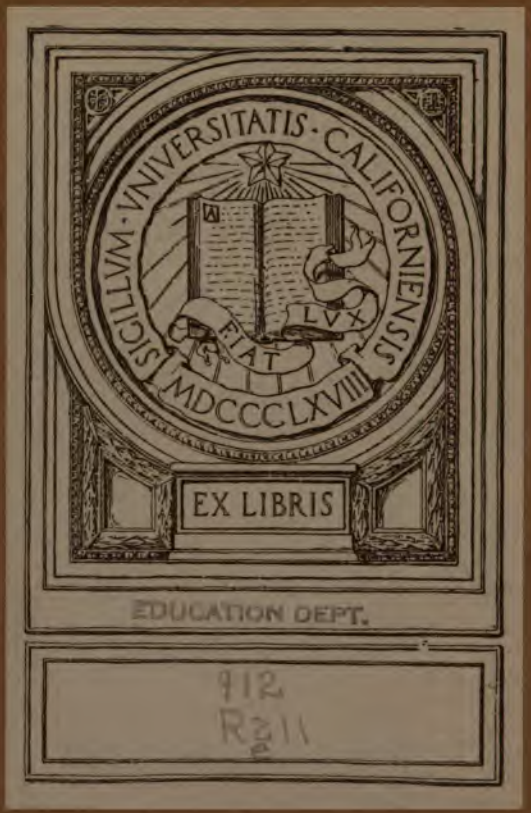

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ENGLISH LITERATURE

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ENGLISH LITERATURE

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PREFACE

THE chief value in the discussion of literature is gained when the student is led to read the literature under discussion. Then, the value of reading the literature consists chiefly in two things: that it affords relief, and that it stimulates, — relief from the "care and wearisome turmoil" of the workaday world, and stimulus to the life of activity in the work of the world. If the reading of literature furnishes a stimulus to that disciplined form of living which we call "writing" or authorship, so much the more is gained than is commonly the case. In this book the authors have placed considerable emphasis upon the types of literature, largely because it is a type or "kind" of literature that the student always thinks of himself as reading, and because his writing, much or little, will always consciously be of one of these types. The types are emphasized also because the historical movements in literature have always stressed more or less the use of certain types at given times. Hence, both use and the logic of history suggest the value of frequent attention to the kind of production which is uppermost at a given time or with a given author. Of course, it is hoped that the study of this book will directly aid the student in passing useful judgments upon what he reads, in novel, drama, favorite magazine, or whatever at any moment is in hand. It still remains true that it is not of so much importance that a reader shall be pleased with what he peruses as that he shall be "right" in being pleased.

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Many autobiographic details which might be of passing interest in connection with authors have been omitted from this book. The main attempt has been to find the spirit of the true and beautiful and useful within the author as it has found expression in what he has written. "The artist is what he does," and comparatively few artists in authorship have done much of special worth excepting to write books. Shakespeare, Keats, Tennyson, Browning, are indeed noted writers, but the facts of their lives other than the fact of writing are most insignificant. However, we have attempted everywhere to make clear the influences which have made the makers of literature in English-speaking countries what they have been.

Acknowledgment of much indebtedness is due to many who have been and are our teachers, colleagues, and students.

T. E. R.
W. M. A.

NOVEMBER 15, 1916.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGES

INTRODUCTION 1–22

Historical Periods and the Types of Literature, 1; Table of Authors, 10.

CHAPTER II

ANGLO-SAXON AND MIDDLE-ENGLISH LITERATURE, 600–1154 . 23–47

Anglo-Saxon, 23; Middle-English, 30.

CHAPTER III

RENAISSANCE LITERATURE, 1500–1613 48–108

The Revival of Learning, 48; Edmund Spenser, 60; The Drama to Shakespeare, 66; William Shakespeare, 78.

CHAPTER IV

THE LITERATURE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, 1613–1700 109–137

Introduction, 109; To Milton, 110; John Milton, 114; John Dryden, 123; Later Contemporaries of Milton and Dryden, 130.

CHAPTER V

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, 1700–1798 138–186

Its General Character, 138; The Poets, 140; The Essayists, 162; The Novelists, 168; Philosophers and Historians, 181.

CHAPTER VI

PAGES

THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1798–1837 . . . 187–251

General Characteristics, 187; The Greater Poets and Novelists, 188; The Lesser Writers of the Period, 232.

CHAPTER VII

THE VICTORIAN ERA, 1837–1890 252–335

General Characteristics, 252; History, 253; Prose Fiction, 257; Criticism, 278; Science, 295; Poetry, 296.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRESENT DAY, 1890– 336–352

Introduction, 336; The Novel, 337; The Short-Story, 340; The Drama, 342; Poetry, 346.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHIEF TYPES OF LITERATURE 353–408

Introduction, 353; Study of the Epic, 354; Study of the Drama, 359; Study of the Essay, 366; Study of the Novel, 370; Study of the Lyric, 379; Study of the Short-Story, 386; Criticism, 394; Letters, 398; Topics for Advanced Study, 404.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

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ENGLISH LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Historical Periods, and the Types of Literature

Length and continuity of the literature. — Among the literatures of all peoples no other has had such a continuous history, unbroken by long periods of lack of production, nor has any other had such a great history, as the literature of the English-speaking peoples. Literature has been produced in the English language and its Teutonic ancestor, the old German language, for considerably more than twelve hundred years. It began with the old Teutonic poems which celebrate the deeds of the near relatives of the Germans, who, clad in blowzy upper garments, narrow trousers, and conical-shaped wolfskin caps, marched into Rome in the train of the imperial conquerors to the delight of the mobs of the Eternal City. Those near relatives were Beowulf and the heroes of the poem which bears his name. If, as is supposed, Beowulf belonged to the court of Hygelac, who reigned as a king about 515 A.D., and if the writer of the poem lived near the time of the hero, then the literature in our tongue began about fourteen hundred years ago. But it is not likely that Beowulf was so great a hero to those with whom he lived as to the man who wrote of his deeds, and hence we think that a century or two must have passed by before the epic story began to be told in writing.

There have been very few centuries, or even decades, since the seventh century, in which some writings of importance were not produced in our tongue; and as man is much the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, the qualities of English literature have always been much alike. English-speaking men have always been writing men, and from the very earliest writers down to Mark Twain and W. B. Yeats and Kipling they have always been filled with the inspiration of thought and feeling which in attractive and interesting ways has made their writings literature.

Geographical distribution of English writers. — It is the custom in studying English literature to give attention exclusively to the writers who have lived in the British Isles. But it is logical to extend the list to include the writers who have lived in America, Australia, India, South Africa, and the islands of the South Seas, using the term " British literature " to describe only that which was produced by men living in the islands of the United Kingdom. Therefore, in the study which will be made in this book, at least passing mention will be given to other important writers in the English language than those who have chanced to do their work within a few hundred miles of London.

Names and dates of the periods in the history of English Literature. — Dr. Samuel Johnson once said that the chief glory of a people arises from its authors. The life of a race shows itself most clearly in the feeling and thought and imagination which its writers put into books. Racial life passes through stages of civilization and culture, and the authors of its books take pictures, as it were, of that life as they see it. Now, if we take England as the center of the life of the people who speak English, it is possible to divide the literary picturing of their civilization and culture into the following periods:

The Anglo-Saxon	600–1154 A.D.
The Middle-English	1154–1500
The Renaissance	1500–1613
The Seventeenth Century	1613–1700
The Eighteenth Century	1700–1798
The Early Nineteenth Century	1798–1837
The Victorian Age	1837–1890
The Present-day	1890–

Flexibility of the dates. — Since literature is the "well-languaged" record of the intellectual and emotional life of groups of men, and since no one large group of men ever passes out of existence at once, therefore the dates dividing these periods cannot be considered as positively fixed. A book may also be written in one age, and yet reflect the spirit of an earlier age. In fact, rarely does a book ever appeal to a great number of readers unless it reflects ideas that have been afloat in the minds of many people before the author begins to write the book, even though he may finely and forcefully reflect those ideas for the first time. Since, also, literature mirrors tendencies and general movements of thought even more strongly than it does minute details of life, it is difficult to make very accurate dates to bound periods in literary history, and hence the dates given above may easily be extended a few years in either or both directions without being untrue to actual facts. The thing to be remembered is that the tendencies of life and the general movements of thought are of more importance than any facts as to dates of the births of authors or as to dates of the publication of books.

Method of study. — Without doubt the ideal way of studying the literature of a race is to study it continuously from its earliest beginnings down to the student's own day. But this is an ideal way which has not achieved ideal results, because in order to secure ideal results by this way of study so much knowledge

of the history of philosophy, of religion, of politics, of art, of science, and of commerce is necessary, that few students, old or young, are competent to interpret correctly the history of literature in its unbroken sequence. It is wise, then, unless the student is well equipped with a wide range of general knowledge, not to undertake the study of the history of literature in full detail, but to secure a general view of that history and to apply much of his energy to close study of the *types* of literature as they are found in various periods.

General contents of the periods. — At the beginning of the study of each of the historical periods in this book, there will be given a general description of the character of the period, but it may be well at this point to give a very summary pre-view.

In the ANGLO-SAXON age little was written which is worthy of attention excepting the epic poems and the heroic songs upon which those epic poems were based. The MIDDLE-ENGLISH period presented to mankind as its chief gift Chaucer, golden-hearted, most human poet, whom Edmund Spenser called the "well of English undefiled," and of whom Walter Savage Landor wrote that he "was worth a dozen Spensers." During the period of the RENAISSANCE we come upon the full-orbed choir consisting of Shakespeare and his fellow Elizabethans, most of whom were sane, clear-sighted, and, generally, wholesome. It was these Elizabethans who, more than any other group of writers, unlocked for us the doors of human nature in all its varying moods. The SEVENTEENTH CENTURY was a century of tumult in politics, in religion, and in all social conditions, and, as we might therefore expect, during that century there was a great deal of feverish and extravagant writing. And yet, as we should also have the right to expect of any period of human history, there were at that time some men who in their

writings provided a corrective to all the extravagant and exaggerated writing, by the production of literature in the most carefully controlled form. Many of the most exquisite and delicately made of all songs were then written by Herrick and his fellow lyric poets; and Bacon and Bunyan, Dryden and Milton, produced a large number of the world's masterpieces, covering, among them, almost all the types of literature. Furthermore, as we have a right to expect of great thinkers in times of turmoil, there came from the writers we have just named and from some others much of the best literary criticism of all time.

It was in the EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, however, that critical investigation of life and of literature came to be a very prominent matter. Much of this critical work was done by Jonathan Swift and Henry Fielding, the giant-like minds of that century, though that which is best known is by lesser men, — Pope and Addison. The eighteenth century was the era of the essay and of the novel, both of which are, above all things, critical of life and literature. During the EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY period, lyric poetry, with all of its frailty and yet freedom from the duller things of earth, showed itself in the most varied ways in the writings of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Byron, Shelley, and many others. The VICTORIAN AGE was a splendid epoch, and many of its great names are already familiar to all who begin the study of literature from the historical point of view. The PRESENT-DAY, from 1890 on, is likely to exclude from our reading much that has been of great value in the past. But it is an age in which there are at work some very earnest, thoughtful, keen, and skilled artists both in verse and prose, though the ease of publication and the present great appetite for reading make possible and almost inevitable the printing of a huge number of unworthy books.

Types of literature, — their historical order. — If we trace

the types of literature through these centuries, we come upon them in about the following order: the epic, the ballad and other brief stories in verse, the drama, criticism, the essay, the novel, the lyric poem, the short-story. Many of these types are contemporaneous with each other; and in the present day all the types, with the exception of the epic such as was written by Milton and by Spenser, are being produced in profusion. Besides these types of written discourse, universally called " literary " because they are written in a manner most readily understood by the greatest number and the most varied kinds of people who read, there are the works of many noted historians, the speeches of great orators, the treatises of learned philosophers, and the daily journals. Many of these are written in the literary manner; among them the works of Macaulay and John Richard Green in history, of Burke and Webster in oratory, of Hume and Thomas Henry Huxley in philosophy and science. These works are as much a part of the history of English literature as are the novels of Thackeray or the poems of Tennyson.

General character of the types. — All the activities of human life which we daily see are signs of the inner impulses and desires and plans of man's spirit. Also each product of man's writing is a symbolic illustration or sign of an intellectual or an emotional condition, or of both. The types of literature do not differ so much in the nature of their subject matter, except in the amount of subject matter included within them, as they differ in their ways of presenting their subject matter. Each type of literature differs from every other in its point of view and in its plan or structure. While no serious person has ever been sure that he can make a perfect definition of any of them, yet it will be well to try to have a fairly definite idea of what each is before one comes into touch with them in their manifold kinds and uses.

Definitions. — The Epic consists of a series of stories, most of them centering about one important character, or, we may say, strung like pearls upon the strand of some great heroic personality, who represents in his history the ideals of the age which tells the stories about him. It is generally a long poem. Often any narrative poem, long or short, is called an epic, simply because it tells a story.

The Ballad is a brief story in verse, quite musical in its movement, sometimes epic because it tells a story representative of an age and a people, and sometimes lyric because it is suffused with personal emotion.

The Drama represents a crisis in the life of an individual or of a group of individuals, and, by means of dialogue, develops that important crisis through a series of minor crises to its logical conclusion. The drama is considered by many to be the most important of all the forms of literature. It is not so difficult to plan as a great novel is, but it represents the most profound and the most subtle work of all the types, and the greatest minds have given their energies to writing it.

Criticism generally takes the form of more or less brief essays, most often in prose, which attempt to explain and determine the worth of the various ways in which man has tried to express his ideas and impressions of life. Unless the term is qualified in some way, " criticism " is nearly always applied to the interpretation of literature.

The Essay was defined by Dr. Samuel Johnson as a " loose sally of the mind." But looseness in thought, and therefore in structure, does not characterize essays of the best quality. Francis Bacon thought of the essay as we think of an assay made in the office of an expert in ores. Perhaps a combination of the idea of Dr. Johnson with that of Bacon would with reasonable accuracy describe the essay. The essay always at-

tempts to make clear, or enforce, or develop, an idea, or the plan thought to be latent in some historical or contemporary experience. Its method may be that of story, of description, of exposition, or the technical method of argumentation.

The Novel is the most ambitious of all the kinds of literature. It endeavors to represent clearly and forcefully a view of the complex social relations of men. It usually deals with individual characters and situations upon the background of the life of a community or of a nation. The more individual its material, the more likely the novel is to be woven into the form of a plot; while the more national, or epic, the material, the more rambling is likely to be the structure of the story.

The Lyric poem is brief, highly musical, sometimes simple, sometimes richly complex in its musical harmonies. It is often as simple in the movement of its story as the ballad, yet often complex to the highest degree. It usually reflects the passion of the mind or of the heart of an individual.

The Short-story is not so modern as it is frequently said to be; but it was consciously brought almost to a state of perfection not earlier than the nineteenth century. It differs from the novel in its brevity, and, usually, in the finely wrought craftsmanship of its plot, but even more in the limited nature of its subject matter. It is only in its background that the short-story can be said to be national, or epic, for it is too restricted in scope to deal with more than a very few incidents and a very few characters. Generally there is but one important and dominant incident related in the life of not more than one or two important characters. Change in the inner character of the persons written of in the short-story may be depicted, but there is hardly room enough for the portrayal of development of character such as is found in the novel and in the drama. The situation in the short-story is usually dramatic.

History is the relation of events. It must be understood that "relating" means more than mere telling; it means showing the relationships of, or interpreting, as well as telling. An Oration is a spoken discourse; there is nearly always associated with it the purpose of moving hearers to action, either at once or in the future. Philosophy is the attempt to discover and explain, by harmonizing them, the principles underlying the sciences. Science is the search for knowledge and the ordering of knowledge when found, usually with the end in view of making that knowledge of use to man. The daily journal, or the newspaper, is a record of current events and an attempt to interpret their meaning.

And now, with a broad general view of the periods of English literature in mind, and some idea of the meaning and importance of each of the types of literature, we are ready to study the details of the relations of periods and types to each other. The following list of authors, grouped under the various periods, with a masterpiece named after each author, will be found convenient to refer to from time to time. The heavier type indicates the more important authors in the period.

TABLE OF AUTHORS

By Periods

I

Anglo-Saxon and Middle-English

Anglo-Saxon

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
849	**Ælfred**	901	The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
1000 (?)	Ælfric		Lives of the Saints
735	Alcuin	804	Revision of "The Vulgate"
550 (?)	**Author of Beowulf**		Beowulf
550 (?)	**Author of Widsith**		Widsith
673	**Bæda**	735	Ecclesiastical History
650 (?)	Cædmon		Paraphrase of "Exodus"
720 (?)	**Cynewulf**		Crist

Middle-English

1340 (?)	**Author of Gawain**		Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
1340 (?)	**Author of Pearl**		Pearl
1316 (?)	Barbour, John	1395	The Bruce
1422 (?)	Caxton, William	1491 (?)	Transl. of "The Golden Legend"
1340 (?)	**Chaucer, Geoffrey**	1400	Canterbury Tales
1110 (?)	Geoffrey of Monmouth	1154	History of the Kings of Britain
1325 (?)	**Gower, John**	1408	Confessio Amantis
1394	James I of Scotland	1437	The King's Quair
1330 (?)	**Langland, William**	1400	Piers Plowman
1165 (?)	Layamon		Brut
1370	Lydgate, John	1451 (?)	Falles of Princes
1430 (?)	**Malory, Sir Thomas**		Morte d'Arthur
1160 (?)	Orm		Ormulum

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1350 (?)	Purvey, John		Revision of Wycliffe's Bible
1325 (?)	Translator of Maundeville		Transl. of " Sir John Maundeville "
1120 (?)	Wace	1184 (?)	Geste de Bretons
1320 (?)	**Wycliffe, John**	1384	Translation of The Bible

II

The Renaissance

1515	Ascham, Roger	1568	Toxophilus, or The School of Shooting
1561	**Bacon, Sir Francis**	1626	Essays
1495	Bale, John	1563	King Johan
1584	**Beaumont, Francis**	1616	The Maid's Tragedy
1559 (?)	**Chapman, George**	1634	Transl. of " Homer "
1514	Cheke, Sir John	1557	Transls. from Greek and Latin
1467 (?)	Colet, John	1519	Lectures
1488	**Coverdale, Miles**	1568	Transl. of The Bible
1585	Drummond, of Hawthornden	1649	Forth Feasting
1592	Fairfax, Edward	1635	Transl. of Tasso's " Jerusalem "
1579	**Fletcher, John**	1625	The Two Noble Kinsmen
1553 (?)	Florio, John	1625	Transl. of Montaigne's " Essays "
1560 (?)	Greene, Robert	1592	Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay
1554	Greville, Fulke (Lord Brooke)	1628	On Human Learning
1500 (?)	Hall, Edward	1547	Hall's Chronicle
1561	Harrington, Sir John	1612	Transl. of Ariosto's " Orlando Furioso "
1497 (?)	Heywood, John	1580 (?)	The Four PP
1530 (?)	Holinshed, Raphael	1580 (?)	Chronicles
1554 (?)	Hooker, Richard	1600	The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1516 (?)	Howard, Henry (Earl of Surrey)	1547	Sonnets
1573 (?)	**Jonson, Ben**	1637	Volpone the Fox
1557 (?)	Kyd, Thomas	1595 (?)	Spanish Tragedy
1558 (?)	Lodge, Thomas	1625	Rosalynd: A Novel.
1554 (?)	**Lyly, John**	1606	Euphues
1564	**Marlowe, Christopher**	1593	Doctor Faustus
1478	**More, Sir Thomas**	1535	Utopia
1567	Nash, Thomas	1601	Will Summer's Testament
1535 (?)	North, Sir Thomas	1601 (?)	Translation of Plutarch's "Lives"
1532	Norton, Thomas	1584	Gorboduc
1540 (?)	Painter, William	1594	The Palace of Pleasure
1558 (?)	Peele, George	1597 (?)	Arraignment of Paris
1552	**Raleigh, Sir Walter**	1618	History of the World
1536	Sackville, Thomas (Lord Bockhurst)	1608	The Mirror for Magistrates
1564	**Shakespeare, William**	1616	Hamlet
1554	**Sidney, Sir Philip**	1586	Arcadia
1552 (?)	**Spenser, Edmund**	1599	The Faerie Queen
1510 (?)	Tottel, Richard		Miscellany of Uncertain Authors
1484 (?)	**Tyndale, William**	1536	Transl. of The New Testament
1505	Udall, Nicholas	1556	Ralph Roister Doister
1503	Wyatt, Sir Thomas (The Younger)	1542	The Lover Waxeth Wiser

III

The Seventeenth Century

1615	Baxter, Richard	1691	Saints' Rest
1605	Browne, Sir Thomas	1682	Religio Medici
1590	Browne, William	1643 (?)	Britannia's Pastorals
1628	**Bunyan, John**	1688	The Pilgrim's Progress
1577	Burton, Robert	1640	Anatomy of Melancholy
1612	Butler, Samuel	1680	Hudibras
1618	**Cowley, Abraham**	1667	Davideis

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1613 (?)	Crashaw, Richard	1649	The Flaming Heart
1573	**Donne, Dr. John**	1631	Satires
1637	Dorset, sixth Earl of (Charles Sackville)	1706	Phyllis, for Shame
1631	**Dryden, John**	1700	All for Love
1601 (?)	Earle, John	1665	Microcosmographie
1620	Evelyn, John	1706	Diary
1600 (?)	**Ford, John**		The Broken Heart
1608	Fuller, Thomas	1661	Worthies of England
1574	Hall, Joseph	1656	Characters of Virtues and Vices
1593	**Herbert, George**	1633	The Temple
1591	**Herrick, Robert**	1674	The Hesperides
1588	**Hobbes, Thomas**	1679	Leviathan
1632	**Locke, John**	1704	Essay on the Human Understanding
1621	Marvell, Andrew	1678	Satires
1583	**Massinger, Philip**	1640	New Way to Pay Old Debts
1570 (?)	Middleton, Thomas	1627	The Changeling
1608	**Milton, John**	1674	Paradise Lost
1642	**Newton, Sir Isaac**	1727	Principia
1652	Otway, Thomas	1685	Venice Preserved
1581	Overbury, Sir Thomas	1613	Witty Characters
1633	**Pepys, Samuel**	1703	Diary
1592	Quarles, Francis	1644	Divine Emblems
1647	Rochester, Earl of (John Wilmot)	1680	Lyric Songs and Epigrams
1613	**Taylor, Jeremy**	1667	Holy Living and Dying
1628	Temple, Sir William	1699	Essays
1621	Vaughan, Henry	1693	Sacred Poems
1605	**Waller, Edmund**	1687	" Go, Lovely Rose "
1582 (?)	**Webster, John**	1652 (?)	The Duchess of Malfi

IV

Eighteenth Century

1672	**Addison, Joseph**	1719	Roger de Coverley Papers
1735	Beattie, James	1803	The Minstrel

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1759	Beckford, William	1844	Vathek
1685	**Berkeley, Bishop**	1755	Siris
1699	Blair, Robert	1746	The Grave
1757	**Blake, William**	1827	Songs of Innocence
1740	**Boswell, James**	1795	Life of Samuel Johnson
1686	Budgell, Eustace	1737	Some " Spectator " Essays
1729	**Burke, Edmund**	1797	Reflections on the French Revolution
1752	Burney, Frances	1840	Evelina
1759	**Burns, Robert**	1796	The Cotter's Saturday Night
1692	Butler, Bishop	1752	Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion
1752	Chatterton, Thomas	1770	Rowley Poems
1670	**Congreve, William**	1729	The Way of the World
1721	**Collins, William**	1759	Ode to Evening
1731	**Cowper, William**	1800	The Task
1661 (?)	**Defoe, Daniel**	1731	Robinson Crusoe
1678	Farquhar, George	1707	The Recruiting Officer
1707	**Fielding, Henry**	1754	Tom Jones
1685	Gay, John	1732	The Beggar's Opera
1737	**Gibbon, Edward**	1794	The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire
1728	**Goldsmith, Oliver**	1774	The Vicar of Wakefield
1716	**Gray, Thomas**	1771	Elegy in a Country Churchyard
1677	Hughes, John	1720	On Style
1711	**Hume, David**	1776	Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding
1709	**Johnson, Samuel**	1784	Rasselas
1775	Lewis, Matthew G.	1818	Ambrosio, or The Monk
1736	Macpherson, James	1796	Ossian
1670 (?)	Mandeville, Bernard	1733	The Fable of the Bees
1729	Percy, Bishop	1811	Reliques of Ancient English Poetry
1688	**Pope, Alexander**	1744	The Rape of the Lock
1764	Radcliffe, Mrs. Ann	1823	The Mysteries of Udolpho

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1686	Ramsay, Allan	1758	The Gentle Shepherd
1723	**Reynolds, Sir Joshua**	1792	Discourses on Painting
1689	**Richardson, Samuel**	1761	Pamela
1721	Robertson, William	1793	History of the Reign of Charles V
1671	Shaftesbury, Anthony, Earl of	1713	Characteristics
1751	**Sheridan, Richard**	1816	The Rivals
1723	**Smith, Adam**	1790	The Wealth of Nations
1721	**Smollett, Tobias**	1771	Roderick Random
1672	**Steele, Sir Richard**	1729	The Conscious Lovers
1713	**Sterne, Laurence**	1763	Tristram Shandy
1667	**Swift, Jonathan**	1745	Gulliver's Travels
1700	**Thomson, James**	1748	The Seasons
1717	Walpole, Horace	1797	The Castle of Otranto
1681	**Young, Edward**	1765	Night Thoughts

American Authors of the Eighteenth Century

1703	Edwards, Jonathan	1758	Freedom of the Will
1706	Franklin, Benjamin	1790	Autobiography
1757	Hamilton, Alexander	1804	Federalist Papers
1743	Jefferson, Thomas	1826	Declaration of Independence
1749	Madison, James	1813	Federalist Papers
1737	Paine, Thomas	1809	The Rights of Man
1732	Washington, George	1799	State Papers

V

Early Nineteenth Century

1775	**Austen, Jane**	1817	Pride and Prejudice
1816	**Brontë, Charlotte**	1855	Jane Eyre
1788	**Byron, George Gordon**	1824	Manfred
1777	**Campbell, Thomas**	1844	Mariners of England
1802	Chambers, Robert	1871	Vestiges of Creation
1772	**Coleridge, Samuel Taylor**	1834	The Rime of the Ancient Mariner
1785	**De Quincey, Thomas**	1859	Joan of Arc

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1767	**Edgeworth, Maria**	1849	Castle Rackrent
1777	Hallam, Henry	1859	Europe during the Middle Ages
1778	**Hazlitt, William**	1830	English Comic Writers
1793	Hemans, Mrs. Felicia	1835	The Forest Sanctuary
1799	Hood, Thomas	1845	Song of the Shirt
1784	**Hunt, Leigh**	1845	The Story of Rimini
1773	Jeffrey, Francis	1850	Essays in the Edinburgh Review
1795	**Keats, John**	1821	Ode on a Grecian Urn
1775	**Lamb, Charles**	1834	Essays of Elia
1802	Landon, Letitia E.	1838	Romance and Reality
1775	**Landor, Walter Savage**	1864	Count Julian
1794	Lockhart, John G.	1854	Life of Sir Walter Scott
1797	Lyell, Sir Charles	1875	Principles of Geology
1803	**Lytton, Bulwer**	1873	The Last Days of Pompeii
1792	Marryat, Capt. Frederrick	1848	Mr. Midshipman Easy
1791	Milman, Henry Hart	1868	History of Latin Christianity
1779	Moore, Thomas	1852	Life of Byron
1785	**Peacock, Thomas Love**	1866	The Misfortunes of Elphin
1776	Porter, Jane	1850	Scottish Chiefs
1763	Rogers, Samuel	1855	Italy
1771	**Scott, Sir Walter**	1832	The Antiquary
1792	**Shelley, Percy Bysshe**	1822	Prometheus Unbound
1774	**Southey, Robert**	1843	Life of Nelson
1787	Whately, Richard	1863	Elements of Logic
1785	Wilson, John ("Christopher North")	1854	*Noctes Ambrosianæ*
1770	**Wordsworth, William**	1850	Ode on Intimations of Immortality

American Authors of the Early Nineteenth Century

1771	Brown, Charles Brockden	1810	Edgar Huntley
1794	Bryant, William Cullen	1878	Thanatopsis

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1789	Cooper, James Fenimore	1851	The Spy
1783	Irving, Washington	1859	Rip Van Winkle
1809	Poe, Edgar Allan	1849	Ligeia

VI

The Victorian Era

1822	**Arnold, Matthew**	1888	Essays in Criticism
1803	Beddoes, Thomas Lovell	1849	Dream-Pedlary
1825	Blackmore, Richard Doddridge	1900	Lorna Doone
1803	**Borrow, George**	1881	The Bible in Spain
1810	Brown, Dr. John	1882	Rab and his Friends
1809	**Browning, Mrs. E. B.**	1861	Sonnets from the Portuguese
1812	**Browning, Robert**	1889	Pippa Passes
1795	**Carlyle, Thomas**	1881	The French Revolution
1819	Clough, Arthur Hugh	1861	Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich
1824	Collins, Wilkie	1889	The Moonstone
1809	**Darwin, Charles R.**	1882	The Origin of Species
1812	**Dickens, Charles**	1870	David Copperfield
1804	Disraeli, Benjamin	1881	Coningsby
1832	Dodgson, Charles Lutwidge (Lewis Carroll)	1898	Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
1819	**Evans, Marian** (George Eliot)	1880	The Mill on the Floss
1809	**Fitzgerald, Edward**	1883	Transl. from Omar Khayyam
1823	Freeman, Edward Augustus	1892	History of the Norman Conquest
1818	Froude, James Anthony	1894	History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Armada
1810	Gaskell, Mrs. Elizabeth	1865	Cranford
1836	Gilbert, William S.	1911	Pygmalion and Galatea
1837	**Green, John Richard**	1883	History of the English People

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1794	Grote, George	1871	History of Greece
1840	**Hardy, Thomas**		The Return of the Native
1822	Hughes, Thomas	1896	Tom Brown at Rugby
1825	**Huxley, Thomas Henry**	1895	Life of David Hume
1848	Jefferies, Richard	1887	The Life of the Fields
1819	**Kingsley, Charles**	1875	Hypatia
1830	Kingsley, Henry	1876	The Brown Passenger
1800	**Macaulay, Thomas Babington**	1859	History of England
1828	**Meredith, George**	1909	The Egoist
1806	**Mill, John Stuart**	1873	System of Logic
1834	**Morris, William**	1896	The Earthly Paradise
1801	**Newman, John Henry**	1890	The Dream of Gerontius
1839	**Pater, Walter**	1894	Marius the Epicurean
1814	**Reade, Charles**	1884	The Cloister and the Hearth
1829	Robertson, T. W.	1871	Caste
1830	**Rossetti, Christina G.**	1894	The Goblin Market
1828	**Rossetti, Dante Gabriel**	1882	The Blessed Damozel
1819	**Ruskin, John**	1900	Modern Painters
1834	Shorthouse, Joseph Henry	1903	John Inglesant
1820	**Spencer, Herbert**	1903	Principles of Sociology
1850	**Stevenson, Robert Louis**	1894	Treasure Island
1837	**Swinburne, Algernon C.**	1909	Atalanta in Calydon
1811	**Thackeray, William M.**	1863	Vanity Fair
1811	**Trollope, Anthony**	1882	Barchester Towers
1820	Tyndall, John	1893	Heat as a Mode of Motion
1822	Wallace, Alfred Russel	1913	The Wonderful Century
	American Authors of the Victorian Era		
1836	Aldrich, Thomas Bailey	1907	Marjorie Daw
1800	Bancroft, George	1891	History of the United States
1855	Bunner, Henry Cuyler	1896	Love in Old Cloathes
1844	Cable, George Washington		The Grandissimes
1835	Clemens, Samuel Langhorne (Mark Twain)	1910	The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1803	Emerson, Ralph Waldo	1882	Essays
1822	Hale, Edward Everett	1909	The Man without a Country
1839	Harte, Francis Bret	1902	The Outcasts of Poker Flat
1804	Hawthorne, Nathaniel	1864	The Scarlet Letter
1809	Holmes, Oliver Wendell	1894	The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table
1837	Howells, William Dean		The Rise of Silas Lapham
1843	James, Henry	1916	The Madonna of the Future
1842	Lanier, Sidney	1881	The Marshes of Glynn
1819	Lowell, James Russell	1891	The Biglow Papers
1814	Motley, John Lothrop	1877	The Rise of the Dutch Republic
1823	Parkman, Francis	1893	Montcalm and Wolfe
1796	Prescott, William H.	1859	The Conquest of Mexico
1834	Stockton, Frank R.	1859	The Lady or the Tiger
1811	Stowe, Mrs. Harriet B.	1896	Uncle Tom's Cabin
1817	Thoreau, Henry D.	1862	Walden
1827	Wallace, Lewis	1905	Ben Hur
1819	Whitman, Walt	1892	O Captain, My Captain
1807	Whittier, John Greenleaf	1892	Snow-Bound

Australian Authors

1846	Clarke, Marcus A. H.	1881	For the Term of his Natural Life
1833	Gordon, Adam Lindsay	1870	Bush Ballads
1841	Kendall, Henry Clarence	1882	Leaves from an Australian Forest

Anglo-Indian Authors

1832	Arnold, Sir Edwin	1904	The Light of Asia
1835	Lyall, Sir Alfred	1911	Siva
1847	Steele, Mrs. F. A.		The Potter's Thumb
	Tagore, Rabindranath		The King of the Dark Chamber

VII

The Present-day

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1835	Austin, Alfred	1913	Lucifer
1877	Barker, Granville		The Madras House
1860	**Barrie, James M.**		The Little Minister
1867	**Bennett, Arnold**		The Old Wives' Tale
1844	Bridges, Robert		The Growth of Love
1857	**Conrad, Joseph**		Lord Jim
1839	**De Morgan, William**		Alice-for-Short
1867	**Galsworthy, John**		Strife
1857	**Gissing, George**	1903	Our Friend, the Charlatan
	Gregory, Lady Augusta		The Workhouse Ward
1861	**Hewlett, Maurice**		The Madonna of the Peach-Tree
1851	**Jones, Henry Arthur**		Michael and his Lost Angel
1871	**Kennedy, Charles Rann**		The Servant in the House
1865	**Kipling, Rudyard**		Captains Courageous
1863	**Locke, William J.**		The Beloved Vagabond
1874	Masefield, John		The Dauber
1853	Moore, George		The Mummer's Wife
1863	Morrison, Arthur		Tales of Mean Streets
1880	**Noyes, Alfred**		Tales of the Mermaid Inn
1868	**Phillips, Stephen**	1916	Paolo and Francesca
1855	**Pinero, Sir Arthur**		Iris
1856	**Shaw, George Bernard**		Candida
	Sinclair, May		The Divine Fire
1863	Sutro, Alfred		The Builder of Bridges
1871	**Synge, John Millington**	1912	Riders to the Sea
1859	Thompson, Francis	1907	The Hound of Heaven
1851	Ward, Mrs. Humphry		Robert Elsmere
1858	Watson, William		Wordsworth's Grave
1866	**Wells, Herbert George**		The New Machiavelli
1865	**Yeats, William Butler**		The King's Threshold
1864	**Zangwill, Israel**		The Melting-Pot

American Authors of the Present-day

Born		*Died*	*Masterpiece*
1849	Allen, James Lane		King Solomon of Kentucky
1837	Burroughs, John		Pepacton
1871	Churchill, Winston		The Crisis
1854	Crawford, F. Marion	1909	Mr. Isaacs
	Dargan, Mrs. Olive Tilford		Lords and Lovers
1857	Deland, Margaretta Wade Campbell		The Iron Woman
1850	Field, Eugene	1895	Echoes from the Sabine Farm
1862	Freeman, Mrs. Mary E. Wilkins		A New England Nun
1844	Gilder, Richard Watson	1909	Two Worlds
1860	Garland, Hamlin		Among the Corn-Rows
1848	Harris, Joel Chandler	1908	Uncle Remus; His Songs and His Sayings
1864	Hovey, Richard	1900	Taliesin: A Masque
1875	Mackaye, Percy		The Scarecrow
1852	Markham, Edwin		The Man with the Hoe
1869	Moody, William Vaughan	1910	The Faith-Healer
1870	Norris, Frank	1902	The Pit
1853	Page, Thomas Nelson		Meh Lady
1867	Porter, William Sidney (O. Henry.)	1910	A Municipal Report
1854	Riley, James Whitcomb	1916	The Old Swimmin' Hole
1862	Wharton, Mrs. Edith		The House of Mirth
1860	Wister, Owen		The Virginian
1855	Woodberry, George Edward		The North Shore Watch
	Canada		
1861	Carman, Bliss		Low Tide on Grand Pré
1869	Leacock, Stephen		Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich
1862	Parker, Gilbert		The Right of Way
1860	Roberts, Charles G. D.		Earth's Enigmas
	South Africa		
	Schreiner, Olive		Dreams

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. During how many centuries has English literature been produced?
2. In what geographical divisions may English-speaking people of to-day be grouped?
3. Give names and dates of the historical divisions of English literature.
4. Name the chief types of literature in the order of their coming into great prominence during the history of English literature.
5. Summarize each of the definitions of these types of literature, using one sentence for each summary.
6. Name at least four authors of those most prominent during each historical period of English literature, and give the title of a masterpiece by each of the authors you name.

CHAPTER II

ANGLO-SAXON AND MIDDLE-ENGLISH LITERATURE

600–1154

I. Anglo-Saxon

Who the Anglo-Saxons were. — The earliest human inhabitants of the British Isles appear to have been cave dwellers and men much like the Eskimos of Greenland. Then came the Iberians, among the descendants of whom are, perhaps, the Basques of northern Spain. A third race to dwell in those islands was the Celts, who probably gave the name Albion to what we now know as England, though it is not impossible that Albion may be an Iberian name. The first Celts to come from the continent were Goidels (or Gaels), and a later swarm were Britons. It is from this second group of Celts that the name Britain is derived. Gauls, Belgians, and Romans also came before the beginning of the Christian era. It was only the Romans who conquered a great part of the islands. They came first under Julius Cæsar, in 55 B.C., Cæsar thinking it necessary to invade Britain in order to prevent the Britons from coming to the continent in aid of their kindred whom he was subduing there. Britain remained a part of the Roman Empire until 410 A.D., over four and one half centuries, when the Romans permanently withdrew because all of Rome's soldiers were needed to keep off attacks of barbarians much nearer Rome than Britain. The Romans did much for Britain. They built fine roads, cleared marshes for tillage, opened up mines,

built houses and cities, extinguished tribal antagonisms, and administered justice.

As early as the fourth century B.C. the Saxons began to invade England, first as merciless pirates and later as home seekers. They appear to have come from the coast of the continent all the way from the northern part of what is now Denmark to as far south and west as into what is now the country of Holland. They brought with them the Jutes from Jutland or northern Denmark, and the Angles from what is now Schleswig-Holstein.

The Jutes subdued southeastern England and the Isle of Wight, the Angles subdued most of the east coast, and the Saxons the greater part of the interior of the island. After the conquest of the Britons the three groups of conquerors were known by the Britons as Saxons, though they gradually came to call themselves English, a name originally equivalent to Angle. From these various facts it is easy to see why we call the inhabitants of England Anglo-Saxons, down until the time of the Norman conquest in the eleventh century.

Old English, or Anglo-Saxon, literature began in the days when the English were still upon the continent and the islands about the northwestern shore of the continent of Europe. In fact, it began at a time so remote from us that the epic poem of *Beowulf* in its original form could not have been written by any one who had more than the slightest acquaintance with ideas, either pagan or Christian, from southern Europe. Both the language and the ideas of *Beowulf* in the original form of the poem were of the ancient Teutonic world alone.

The divisions of Anglo-Saxon literature. — Anglo-Saxon literature may be divided into two parts: that which was brought from the continent to Great Britain, and that which was produced in England itself.

1. *On the Continent*

We do not know how much of written song and story was brought into the land of the Britons by the Angles and Saxons in the days of the Wandering of the Nations into the confines of the Roman Empire. But the poem of *Beowulf* and one other poem called *Widsith*, the Far-Wanderer, are the most important which have survived from among those brought at the time of the migration. The first of these is the greater, and will require the more notice. The second of the two, *Widsith*, is a summary of the heroic poetry of the land the Romans called "Germania." It is probably a century or two older than *Beowulf*.

Beowulf. — The ancient epic of *Beowulf* must have been written later than the early years of the sixth century A.D., because one of its characters was a great northern chieftain of that time. The poem has often been overestimated, for no other apparent reason than that it is old. Many books retain their places upon our library shelves chiefly because of reputation, and not because any one cares nowadays to read them. This epic, however, is still read with interest by those who are attracted by tales of wonder and by those interested to see that the characteristic types of men to-day have had their counterparts in olden times. The strong, stirring movement of the rhythm of the poem, the tone of tragic melancholy, the pictures of the grim and somber scenery of far northern Europe and the fascination of stormy seas, are also features which hold the interest of its readers. Furthermore, its story is a thrilling story of fighting; the bold and courageous sea barons of Beowulf are among the heroes of all time.

Beowulf was a Geat (probably a Swede), a thane of King Hygelac. He hears that Hrothgar, king of the Danes, has for

twelve years been harassed by a moor monster, called Grendel, who comes by night and takes away as many as thirty thanes at a time. He sails to defend the Danes. Hrothgar and his men are persuaded to withdraw from the hall or palace, leaving Beowulf with thirteen chosen Geats to await Grendel's next attack. Grendel arrives in due course of time and at once kills one of the Geats. Then, reaching for Beowulf, he quickly finds his match. In the struggle to free himself from Beowulf's grasp, Grendel loses one hand, arm, and shoulder. But this does not end the matter. Though Hrothgar returns with feasting and gladness to the hall, Grendel's mother, a monster of the fens and the deep waters, rouses herself to revenge. She comes and seizes the favorite attendant of the Danish chieftain. Beowulf is not present, but is quickly summoned. He comes with his famous sword, Hrunting, a weapon that thus far has never failed the man who has grasped it. He pursues Grendel's mother into her watery lair, but there finds that the great sword is useless. He sees near by an antique sword, keen-edged, giant-forged, and, grasping it, slays the monster, —" She collapsed on the floor, the sword was blood-stained, the warrior rejoiced in his work." Beowulf then discovers the lifeless body of Grendel, shears off the head and carries it to Hrothgar. Beowulf leaves Golden-hilt, the giant-forged sword, with Hrothgar, and returns to the court of Hygelac.

The second part of the poem shows Beowulf, the great swimmer and fighter, now fighting with human enemies, after having been fifty years a king. Beowulf wins all combats, until one day he goes to do battle with a dragon who for three hundred years has guarded a treasure in a cave near the " sea-surge." King Beowulf and one retainer, Wiglaf, face the fire-breathing dragon and dispatch him with sword and dagger; but Beowulf is mortally wounded. Even in his death the great

hero brings benefits to his people, for the wonderful treasure is now theirs.

A book is great which adequately reflects, and by such reflection influences, the abiding characteristics and course of human life. The epic of *Beowulf* has some elements of greatness. It reveals that the early English were of the same imaginative and tumultuous temperament, the same mixture of joy and somberness, as the English of much later date, and it has by its importance helped to continue these traits of temperament to our own day,—for literature that is worth while is not only a reflection of life but also an inspiration to life. And yet these traits in the mind and mood of the early English are revealed in this epic only by the fact that the writer of the poem and, we must infer, his audience were deeply in sympathy with the people who then possessed these traits; for the characters in the poem were not English, but belonged to tribes living farther north than the English lived even when they were upon the continent of Europe.

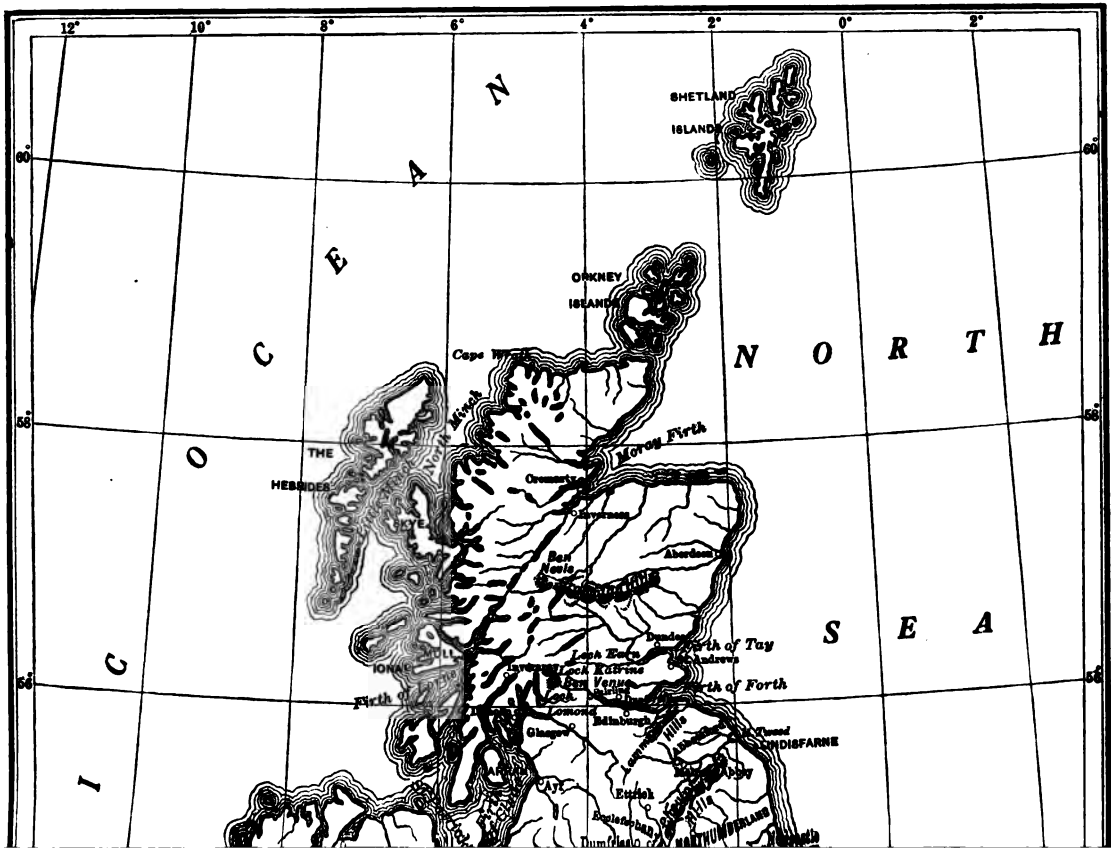
We should not think of the author of *Beowulf* as an English Homer. And yet the poem is not unlike the *Odyssey* because it deals with the life of the aristocratic in the political and social realm, and because its ideas are those of noblemen, not only in the sense of rank, but in the sense of manhood as well. It is evident that this poem could not have been written in an age of utter barbarism. Many complex social situations and much refinement in thought are represented in it; and this could not have been unless its author had been acquainted with an advanced degree of civilization and gentle culture. The inhabitants of Great Britain had become rather well Romanized under the rule of the Cæsars, and they thought that the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes who conquered them were dreadful savages. On the other hand, the Latin writer, Tacitus, praised very highly, in exaggerated terms, the fine qualities of the civilization of the

inhabitants of Germania. But an examination of the remains which have come down from the Bronze and the early Iron Age, and a study of the ancient poetry produced among the English while they were still upon the continent, shows that a middle ground between the opinions of the Britons and of Tacitus is the safe one to take, — the ground that among the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes were many of the elements of civilization and culture.

2. *In England*

The Christian epics. — There are a few Christian sentiments in *Beowulf*, but they were, apparently, introduced by the copyist of the main body of the poem as it has come down to us. But when we turn to the Anglo-Saxon literature produced in England itself, we find at least three Christian epics which were produced in Old English and which are worthy of mention. These three Christian epic poems are *Juliana*, *Elene* (Helena the mother of Constantine the Great, and finder of the true cross), and *Andreas*. *Juliana* and *Elene* were the works of Cynewulf, probably a Northumbrian, that is, a man from north of the Humber River. It is not so certain that *Andreas* was written by Cynewulf, though its spirited narrative and its ornamented style are very like those of Cynewulf. *Andreas* is the most interesting of the three epics, being a story of the adventurous voyage of St. Andrew for the purpose of rescuing St. Matthew from the hands of cannibals.

The Old English scholars. — When the English in Northumbria were converted to Christianity, Latin literature began to affect the progress of English literature. The schools and teachers of the part of England north of the Humber River quickly became the equals of any upon the continent. Yet thoughtfulness and skill and imagination were not confined to the learned in the schools. A simple cowherd named Cædmon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ICELAND SEA
NORTH SEA
SHETLAND ISLANDS
ORKNEY ISLANDS
Cape Wrath
THE HEBRIDES
North Minch
Moray Firth
Inverness
SKYE
Ben Nevis
Aberdeen
Dundee
Firth of Tay
St Andrews
Loch Earn
Loch Katrine
Ben Venue
Firth of Forth
Lomond
Edinburgh
Glasgow
Tweed
HOLY ISLAND
FARNE ISLANDS
Ayr
Eyemouth
Berwick
Dumfries
NORTHUMBERLAND
Carlisle

Donegal Bay
ULSTER
Belfast
Armagh
CONNAUGHT
Galway
Athlone
R. Bann
Dundalk
IRISH SEA
Morecambe Bay
R. Mersey
Liverpool
Manchester
Sheffield
R. Humber
The Wash
LINCOLN
Lincoln
Boston
Nottingham
LEICESTER
RUTLAND
NORFOLK
Norwich
Ely
HUNTINGDON
CAMBRIDGE
SUFFOLK
Peterborough
Lutterworth
Rugby
Kenilworth
Warwick
Stratford-upon-Avon
Worcester
Malvern Hills
Gloucester
Oxford
BUCKINGHAM
HERTFORD
ESSEX
London
R. Thames
R. Stour
Canterbury
Dover
Strait of Dover
KENT
SURREY
Tunnyngdale
Horsham
Hastings
SUSSEX
Winchester
Salisbury
Amesbury
HAMPSHIRE
Stonehenge
Eton
Stoke Poges
Malmesbury
Bristol
Bath
Wells
Glastonbury
Taunton
Exmoor Forest
Bridgwater
Bristol Channel
Ilfracombe
Tintagel Castle
Bideford
Dartmoor
Eggdon Heath
Isle of Wight
Plymouth
St. Ives
Penzance
Land's End
ENGLISH CHANNEL
FRANCE
Irish Sea
Solway Firth
Skiddaw
Windermere
Ullswater
Derwentwater
Ben Nevis
Grampians
Cheviots
Durham
Tees
Whitby
Scarborough
York
Lancaster
Leeds
Hull
Chester
Shrewsbury
Sherwood Forest
Derby
Lichfield
Birmingham
Stafford
Wolverhampton
Snowdon
Anglesey
Holyhead
Conway
Flint
Denbigh
Caernarvon
Merioneth
Montgomery
Radnor
Shropshire
Cheshire
Nottingham
Dublin
Kildare
Kilkenny
Limerick
Tipperary
MUNSTER
Killarney
Cork
Queenstown
R. Shannon
Waterford Harbour
Wexford Harbour
St. George's Channel
Cardigan Bay
Fishguard
Cardigan
Pembroke
Carmarthen
Brecknock
Glamorgan
Monmouth
St. David's
Tenby
Caerleon
Hereford
Berkshire
Wiltshire
Somerset
Devon
Dorset
Cornwall
Bedford
Buckingham
Oxford
Essex
Suffolk
Norfolk
Huntingdon
Cambridge
Rutland
Lincoln
Derby
Nottingham
Leicester
Warwick
Worcester
Shropshire
Stafford
Chester
Flint
Denbigh
Caernarvon
Anglesey
Merioneth
Montgomery
Radnor
Cardigan
Pembroke
Carmarthen
Brecknock
Glamorgan
Monmouth
Hereford
Gloucester
Somerset
Devon
Dorset
Cornwall
Wiltshire
Berkshire
Hampshire
Surrey
Sussex
Kent
Essex
Hertford
Buckingham
Bedford

had the rhythmic fire within his soul; and when occasion presented itself at the hands of Hilda, the Northumbrian Abbess, Cædmon composed and sang the best paraphrases of the Scriptures which ancient England produced. This was in the last half of the seventh century. Bæda, a great scholar of St. Paul's monastery at Jarrow, Northumberland, during the early years of the eighth century, wrote many treatises in Latin which were used as textbooks in even far-away Italy. The work from his hand which is of more interest to us, however, was the last one he wrote, a translation into English of the *Gospel of St. John.*

The torch of learning passed on to Alcuin in the eighth century, to Ælfred in the ninth, and to Ælfric in the tenth. Alcuin is a prominent figure in the history of education, as it was he whom Charlemagne, the great king of all the Franks, summoned in 782 to come to the continent and take charge of his Palace School.

Alcuin was of Northumbria; Ælfred and Ælfric of Wessex. Ælfred sometimes seems to us to have been almost as legendary as Arthur of the Round Table. But he was a very real and human character, — a good and wise king, a brave fighter, and an admirable scholar. Most of his scholarly work consisted of translations from the Latin into English. It is to him also that we owe that most interesting book known as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.* Ælfred began the records which we find in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* by directing his helpers to compile from the *Ecclesiastical History* of Bæda and from the writings of some other chroniclers the events which had occurred in Britain from the time of the Roman invasion. After Ælfred's time the work was continued by writers contemporaneous with the events recorded, until the death of King Stephen in 1154.

Ælfric was a grammarian, a glossary maker, a writer of sermons, and a translator of a part of the *Old Testament.* Dry

as all this work may seem, yet the prose in which he wrote was the best prose in the Old English language, and his translations from the Bible are the most intelligently made, not even excepting the work of Wycliffe, before Tyndale in the sixteenth century. Ælfric was not only highly intelligent, but he was also the most careful artist among the older prose writers, as Cynewulf had been the most careful artist among the older poets.

II. Middle-English

The historical background. — Middle-English literature might as well be called Norman-English, for it was the conquest of England by William of Normandy in 1066 and the subsequent severe discipline of both English and Normans under William and Henry I and Henry II that made the two races one in blood, in interests, and in language. William's feudal army and his fierce barons brought with them from France what little civilization northern France then possessed, and made easily possible the later influence upon the English people of the wonderful culture of northern France during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry, all of these arts have been thought by many not to have reached a higher point at any time than they reached in Italy and France during the early centuries of the Crusades, and it was due to the conquest of England by William of Normandy that the influence of these arts could reach England's isolated shores. It was during the centuries from 1200 to 1500 that the Gothic cathedrals, with all the wealth of sculpture, painting, and music that followed them, were begun in northern France and England. It was during these centuries that great wars with France were almost constantly in progress, and this meant a constant contact with the rich culture which France was absorbing from Italy along with that which she was cultivating upon her own part.

Close touch with the science and learning and commerce of the East did not come until the next, or Renaissance period, which was most powerful after the fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Ottoman Turks in 1453. But the Norman court, the Norman clergy, and the Norman and English soldiers who went upon the continent to war for the possession of French territory, and those who went much farther, even to the Holy Land, as crusaders, or soldiers of the cross, in order to wrest from the Saracens the Holy Sepulcher, — all of these helped greatly to make the production of the literature which flowered during this Middle- or Norman-English period, from 1154 to 1500.

1. *To Chaucer*

Layamon. — While the Anglo-Saxon period of English literature closed with the ending of the *Chronicle* in 1154, yet it was not until 1200 that the Middle-English period began to be fruitful. It was about that date, usually said to be 1205, that Layamon wrote his *Brut*, or Brutus. Layamon borrowed his material. In 1147 Geoffrey of Monmouth had completed writing his *History of the Kings of Britain*. He had written it in Latin. It was a wonderful storybook. Incorporated within it were many ancient traditions from Wales. Then, in 1155, a writer named Wace had produced a book entitled *Brut*, borrowing much material from Geoffrey of Monmouth. Wace wrote his book in French. At last, Layamon in his turn borrowed from both Geoffrey and Wace, and in an English poem of 32,000 lines with less than fifty French words among them, introduced into purely English literature the Welsh traditions out of which grew the stories which Malory and Tennyson have converted into the legends of Arthur and the Round Table. Layamon is a man to be remembered for three reasons: because he made these old

British tales truly English, because his poetry was the best poetry in English since the days of Cynewulf, and because it was he who first told, so far as we know, the story of the Passing of Arthur.

Ballads; comic poems; romances; histories; religious and moral writings. — The time from Layamon to the middle of the fourteenth century is rich in various kinds of literature. There are the popular ballads; there are the comic poems, such as *The Fox and the Wolf*, and *The Owl and the Nightingale;* there is that very original work among medieval romances, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight;* there is *Pearl*, our earliest *In Memoriam* and a sort of unorthodox theological argument, probably by the same Lancashire poet who wrote *Sir Gawain;* there are a few histories, sermons, and religious handbooks; there are the more important religious writings of William Langland and of John Wycliffe; and there are the works of Gower.

Ballads. — A few of the ballads have survived and are as interesting to us as they were to the readers of the thirteenth century. Folk tales furnished much of the material for the longer and earlier epics. They also provided the subject matter for these narrative songs we are here calling ballads. The ballad of *Chevy Chase*, that of the *Twa Corbies*, and the *Lytell Gestes of Robin Hood* are the most interesting of them all.

Comic poems. — The monkish Anglo-Saxon writers had been too anxious about the saving of their souls to permit them to give much time to comic writings; but by the time the Middle-English period was well under way much comic writing from the continent had become popular. The two poems in fable manner mentioned above, namely, *The Fox and the Wolf* and *The Owl and the Nightingale*, are the best among them all.

Gawain. — The story of *Gawain* has been called a chivalrous *Pilgrim's Progress*. The poem is the story of the ordeal, in

courage, in loyalty, and in temperance, of Gawain, a knight of King Arthur's Court. In this poem Gawain is treated as perfect in courtesy, though that has not been the attitude of all the poets who have written of him. The story revolves about a curious incident. While Arthur's court is feasting and awaiting some "main marvel," there rides into the hall of the king a Green Knight upon a green horse, and asks, "Will any gentleman cut off my head, on condition that I may have a fair blow at him, and no favor, in a twelve-month's time?" Gawain accepts the hazard and cuts off the Green Knight's head, whereupon the head, which is picked up by the Green Knight, speaks, summoning Gawain to meet him at the Green Chapel in a year's time and await the return blow.

Histories. — Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* was, of course, feigned history, or fiction. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was true history, though often that of the states of mind of the monks at Peterborough rather than a record of outward events. But when Henry II, the great Angevin, became king of England in 1154, the chronicling of events began to be done only in Latin prose and in French rhyme. The French rhymers, however, stimulated the singers and sayers in English, among them no rhyming historian excelling in style Robert of Gloucester. Robert had much to inspire him, for he lived during the reign of Edward I, one of the greatest of the medieval kings.

The *Travels of Sir John Maundeville* is a storybook compiled by Jean de Bourgogne, a physician who died at Liège in 1372. An anonymous writer translated it into English late in the fourteenth century. We mention it here, because it seems to have been known in Chaucer's time, Maundeville is as much a fictive character as are the tales he tells, and the book belongs along with the feigned history by Geoffrey of Monmouth, so far as its

relation to fact is concerned. But, in its translated form, it is classic English.

Religious and moral writings. — Among religious writings, the *Ayenbite of Inwyt* (Remorse of Conscience) is sometimes praised by historians of literature, but it is only a translation from the French made in 1340 by a monk at Canterbury, and a very poor translation at that. Its chief interest is that it is extant in the good monk's own handwriting. A work called *Ormulum* is also preserved in the handwriting of its author; we do not know who he was, though no doubt his name was Orm, for we read, "This book is named Ormulum for that Orm it wrought." The book is a plea for the "simple life," but is more famous as a curiosity on account of its peculiar words. Its writer seems to have been a Dane in blood. The *Ancren Riwle* is the only other work of this sort which we need to think of as of much worth. The book was intended to be a rule book for Anchoresses, but the passages which hold our attention most are those that are humorous, whether so intended or not. For instance, it is related that a nun keeps a cow; when the cow strays she is impounded; the *religieuse* loses her temper and becomes rather furious in her speech; but in the end she finds it necessary to humble herself, implore the heyward, and pay the damages. "Wherefore," says the chronicle, "it is best for nuns to keep a cat only."

While the *Pearl* had been a kind of theological thesis, intended to prove the somewhat heretical notion that all souls of the blessed are equal in happiness, each being a king or a queen, the *Vision Concerning Piers Plowman* by William Langland is the work of a passionately zealous moral reformer. The book is not unlike *Pilgrim's Progress*, though the writer is no such constructive artist as John Bunyan. Since the book is in the form of a dream which came to the author "in a May morning,

on Malvern hills," we should expect it to be written in a rambling fashion. And it is. But its incoherence may be due as much to the fact that its author wavers constantly between his highly serious and his very comic views of life. Due to the persistence of the idea that the religious and moral life must be a sad and somber one, the commentators upon Langland too often overlook the fact that comic description occupies much of the space within the *Vision*. The work is filled with typical characters drawn from ordinary life, and is in reality a search after the truths important to human existence. This book was followed by *Dowel*, *Dobet*, and *Dobest*, also by Langland. Do Well, Do Bet, and Do Best are characters in the end identified with Jesus Christ, who is Love dressed as Piers Plowman. The poem should be carefully read along with the writings of Chaucer, by the student who desires to secure a full-rounded picture of English society in the fourteenth century, for it gives the side of life which Chaucer neglects.

While there may have been mild and unessential heresy in the author of the *Pearl*, it remained for Wycliffe to become England's first real Protestant in connection with a doctrine which was considered vital by the Church, the doctrine of transubstantiation, or of the changing of the bread and wine of the sacrament into the body and blood of Christ. Wycliffe's battle with the papal authority was a serious one. As reformers who are at all successful usually do, he appealed to the common people in their own speech, going to what the papacy at that time considered the excessive length of translating the *New Testament* into the English tongue, and directing and himself working upon a part of the translation of the *Old Testament*. The excellent English of both, however, is due to the labors of a much-overlooked man, John Purvey, who revised the whole, doing it, though, under the authority of Wycliffe himself.

John Gower was a learned and talented man, but greatly lacking the genius of either Langland or Chaucer. He wrote in French, in Latin, and in English. He was, like Langland, a story-teller, and a religious and social reformer. His age needed more interesting reformers than he, however. In 1393 was written his *Confessio Amantis;* in spite of its title, it was in the English tongue. While it should be said in favor of the book that it is a larger, and a better, collection of tales than any which had preceded it in English, yet the reader generally agrees with James Russell Lowell that the writings of Gower are most aptly called " works."

2. *Chaucer*

The influences making Chaucer. — Ruskin has brilliantly made the claim for the thirteenth century that it was the greatest century in the world's history. It certainly was a century in which the arts, especially in Italy and in France, attained in many instances heights which they have not again attained. If that century has any rivals in the arts, they are two only, the third century before Christ and the sixteenth after. However, the first of these was confined in its culture to so limited an area, Greece alone, and the second had within it so many elements of decay, that it is not difficult for many to agree with Ruskin that the thirteenth century, with its highly speculative theology and philosophy, its foundation of many of the world's greatest universities, its building of the world's most wonderful cathedrals, — the century of Dante, " the Central Man of all the World," — was the foremost in the production of those things which have refined human existence. This is the century which preceded Chaucer, and helped, through its literature chiefly, more than all other things combined, to make Chaucer what he was. Chaucer was born about the year 1340.

Chaucer is one of the finest and greatest of literary artists. It is customary to divide his work into that of a French, an Italian, and an English period. But while this is a considerable aid to the memory in classifying his writings, it is a misleading device. The studies of Chaucer in Italian literature and his residence for short periods in Genoa, Pisa, Florence, and the cities of Lombardy were important. They brought him into contact with the productions of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. They opened up to him the strong and stirring way of telling exquisite stories which those men had inherited from the classics of antiquity. But this does not prove that he became Italianate. He did not merely copy Italian work. Among his earliest productions, before the so-called " Italian period " in his life, he had already employed " heroic " verse (the five-foot rhymed couplet), the ten-syllable line, and the narrative stanza, all of which he is so often said to have copied from Italy. Chaucer was an independent genius in his methods, influenced, of course, by all that he experienced, but never a mere imitator.

He owes much more to France than to Italy; and this is due not alone to the fact that he was brought up in the Frenchified court of Edward III, but also to the fact that it was the literature of thirteenth-century France that was dominating all artistic authorship in his day. English literature had been in its achievements not only behind in time but below in quality the literature of France. But in Chaucer it was raised to the level of the best that France had produced; and in England in his works, as well as in Italian and French literature, the fine spirit of courtesy and grace, which was the ideal of the Middle Ages, found high and notable culmination.

Chaucer's life. — As is the case with most that has been written about the life of Shakespeare, so it is with most that has been written about the life of Chaucer; it consists, in both cases,

of guesses. A few facts concerning the life of Chaucer are all that are known. In youth he was a page at court. It was during this time that the Black Prince brought the French king a prisoner to London, in 1357. Later, in 1359, Chaucer went with the army of Edward III in his invasion of France. He was made a prisoner, and was held by the French for a few months. It is recorded that sixteen pounds were paid by the king towards his ransom. Like Shakespeare, Chaucer had some business acumen, it would seem. At least he became a customs official, as the nineteenth-century Hawthorne did in America; though the Englishman seems to have been a much more active occupant of his office than the American of his. Chaucer saw much of political turmoil: the controversy over administrative reforms which centered about the Good Parliament of 1376; Wat Tyler's Rebellion in 1380, which was a peasants' revolt; the absolutism, and finally the dethronement of Richard II. He saw much of ecclesiastical and religious strife: the beheading of the Archbishop of Canterbury by the rebellious peasants; the Lollard movement, partly political and partly socialistic; and the movement toward reform, under Wycliffe. He saw the beginnings of modern ideas in the literature about him; not much that was modern in Gower, but a great deal in Langland and in Wycliffe, — and as for himself, he, along with Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton, is one of the poets whose ideas are primarily those of all time.

His relation to the people. — One of his biographers has written — and many others have written similar things — that "Chaucer was not a poet of the people." This is said because Chaucer did not write harshly about the darker side of the life of the common people. But surely his subtle irony in the description of the qualities of the mind and life of those who were responsible for the sufferings of the poor is not a less effective

weapon than the uncouth and harsh denunciations by the author of *Piers Plowman*. He does not directly moralize in any of his *Tales*, excepting in that of the Canon's Yeoman and in that of the Manciple, but, as Goethe has said, "If there is a moral in the subject, it will appear, and the poet has nothing to consider but the effective and artistic treatment of his subject; if he has as high a soul as Sophocles, his influence will always be moral, let him do what he will." The facts are that Chaucer saw much of the people and sympathetically understood what he saw, and then vividly and clearly pictured the chief aspects of the life of the most typical individuals whom he had seen.

His effect upon the language. — Chaucer translated considerably from other languages into his own; he also adapted much that he found in other languages. He handled all this material in a scholarly fashion. But he was one who, in what he adapted and brought directly over from other languages as well as in what he invented, reveals that he saw not with the physical eye alone, but also with his imagination and with his reason. As a great poet, he wrote down his thought, his convictions, and his visions, in diction and phraseology that was the richest, most beautiful, and most effective that had yet been employed in England. This had a notable effect upon the language of the day.

The language of the Anglo-Saxons was a Teutonic language, one of the many branches of the Indo-European tongue which spread from India to the west of Ireland. The Anglo-Saxon language had been, in the northern part of England, much modified by the invasion of the Danes during the eighth and ninth centuries. In the south it had been much modified by the Norman Conquest in the latter part of the eleventh century. The Danes had introduced more and slightly different Teutonic words and phrases; the Normans introduced the French, not a

Teutonic but a Latin language. But a language is, above all other things, the possession of the common people. It grows chiefly from their usage, and not from that of the schools of the technically learned nor from the courts. In spite of the dominance of Latin and French in schools and court, by the middle of the fourteenth century the language which had come down through many vicissitudes and with many changes from the Anglo-Saxons had become recognized as fit for even a " gentleman " to speak and write. This language Chaucer used so finely and so energetically that the language of the common people in and about London, the Midland dialect, became the standard speech of the English race.

His lesser works. — The chief product of the early days of Chaucer's career as a poet was his translation of the *Romance of the Rose*, a French poem of the greatest days of the medieval period, and originally written during the wonderful century preceding Chaucer, probably at least a hundred years before his day. This beautiful poem is an allegory of Love, and is filled with serious and satirical subtleties. His translation has been lost, so we are not interested in it as a translation; but in its effects we are greatly interested, for it had a more profound effect upon its translator than all the court life, all the continental residence, all the literature of medieval Italy, or all the literature of the ancient classical age. It gave him suggestions of the forms which he should employ in his own productions, and it molded forever his attitude to life.

The next of the important works of Chaucer is the *Troilus and Criseyde*, not a translation, as it is often called, but a thorough remaking of an epic by Boccaccio, the story-writer of fourteenth-century Italy. Though occasionally tedious, still it was a stronger and more substantial work than its original. The Renaissance, in which Boccaccio shared in Italy, can hardly

INTERIOR OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

be said to have found its way to England in the fourteenth century; hence it is the *medieval* Chaucer who borrows from the *renaissance* Boccaccio and excels him in his own field.

Aside from the *Canterbury Tales*, there remain among his important works, *The Parliament of Fowls* and the *Legend of Good Women*, both of them filled with reminiscences of the reading of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. The first is a semi-political poem in celebration of the wooing of Anne of Bohemia by Richard II of England. The second is written in praise of the faithful love of woman.

The Canterbury Tales. — In the fourteenth century it was the habit of the English people, as it still is, upon a holiday to make a pilgrimage, traveling in groups. The most pleasant pilgrimage for those who lived in Middlesex, the county in which Chaucer lived, was to the shrine of Thomas à Becket, at Canterbury. Chaucer must have made one of these pilgrimages in some spring-time earlier than 1388, for it was in that year that the *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales* seems to have been written. These pilgrimages were much more democratic affairs in those days than they are now. It was the custom to start from some public house or inn, persons of all ranks and walks of life traveling freely but together for safety's sake. Chaucer makes his pilgrims set out from the Tabard Inn of Southwark, a suburb of London, to ride on horseback to Canterbury and home again, and plans to make each of them tell tales. This is the framework of the great poem. The student will find a somewhat similar device employed by Boccaccio before Chaucer, and later by Longfellow in his *Tales of a Wayside Inn*.

Chaucer had a magnificent eye for color, a superb ear for music, and a penetrative insight into character. The *Tales* are filled with the love of external nature. The lines sing themselves forever in the memory of any one who reads them. It is

in the *Prologue*, especially, that he portrays nearly all the types of character of consequence in the England which had become truly English by his time. The characters stand out from the pages as living men and women. " I see all the pilgrims," said Dryden, " their humours, their features, and their very dress, as distinctly as if I had supped with them at the Tabard in Southwark." Counting the Host of the Tabard Inn, and the Canon's Yeoman, who joins the company on the road, and the poet himself, there are thirty-two pilgrims, each of whom, according to the plan outlined in the *Prologue*, is to tell four tales: two tales on the journey to and two on the journey from Canterbury. Only twenty-three *Tales*, however, are completed, — unless we count the very brief fragment, " The Rhyme of Sir Thopas." The pilgrims include the Knight, the Squire, the Yeoman, the Cook, the Miller, the Lawyer, the Doctor, the Merchant, the Plowman, the Shipman, several ecclesiastical types, and many others. The ecclesiastical characters are nearly all portrayed with much of satire, because of their worldliness and gross materialism, though the town Parson, brother to the Plowman, is delineated with the most loving and reverent touch of all: a man poor in the goods of this world, but rich in holy thought and work. This parson and the scholar or " Clerk " of Oxford and the Plowman are to modern readers the most attractive of all of these figures, though the author of them seemed to think the Wife of Bath the best character he had drawn.

The tale told by the Nun's Priest has charmed more people than any other one of the tales, even though it is the many times told mock-heroic story of Chanticleer and the Fox. The tale which the Wife of Bath relates is little more than a variation of *Beauty and the Beast*, though somewhat reversed in details.

The first story, however, had been told by the Knight. He was asked for the first one, as was fitting, because of his dignified position in the society of that day. His story, as we should expect, is one of knighthood and the rescue of fair women in distress. Then the drunken Miller insists that it is his turn, and he proceeds to relate a coarse story of a foolish carpenter and his wife and various other distinctly town types. It is a strong story, but it offends the Reeve, who, next, in his story draws a portrait of a big, bullying miller. Chaucer, when his turn arrives, begins with a rhyming ballad of Sir Thopas, a parody of the popular " gestes " of the time. Its cheap jingles become unbearable, and he is commanded by mine Host to " tell in prose somewhat at the least in which there be some mirth or some doctrine." Chaucer chooses then to tell the " Tale of Melibeus." To us to-day this tale is more dull than the " Sir Thopas." Perhaps Chaucer wanted to illustrate the fact that moralizing prose stories are sometimes deadly dull, for " Sir Thopas " is both moralistic in purpose and highly wearisome in story detail.

The *Tales* taken together represent the wide scope of the life of the Middle Ages and its reflection in poetry; they comprise " the legend of the saint, the romance of the knight, the wonderful fables of the traveller, the coarse tale of common life, the love story, the allegory, the animal-fable, and the satirical lay." The tales are merely tales, not plot-stories, not dramatically relating a crisis in life. Most of the tales are old, but they are told " with a new and English beauty." The most English of them are those told by the Miller, the Reeve, the Cook, the Wife of Bath, the Merchant, the Friar, the Nun's Priest, and the Pardoner. These were written before 1390. The work of the last ten years of Chaucer's life, between 1390 and 1400, shows a decline in power.

The "Father" of English poetry. — The attitude of men of letters towards Chaucer has been one of almost worship. Edmund Clarence Stedman called him "the fount of English pure," and "the sire of minstrelsy." Longfellow wrote of him as "the poet of the dawn." Drayton described him as

> First of those that ever brake
> Into the Muses' treasure, and first spake
> In weighty numbers.

And Tennyson praised him as

> The morning star of song, who made
> His music heard below.
>
> Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath
> Preluded those melodious bursts that fill
> The spacious times of great Elizabeth
> With sounds that echo still.

3. *The Fifteenth Century*

Lydgate and others. — Between Chaucer and the middle of the reign of Henry VII there is little writing worthy of extended attention.

John Lydgate in 1424–25 made a very free translation from Boccaccio and called it the *Falls of Princes*. It is a vivid book in its plan, making the "mournful dead" among great men and women from Adam to King John of France, who was captured by the Black Prince at the battle of Poitiers, appear before the pensive Boccaccio and tell of their defeated lives. This poem is an important one, chiefly because it influenced eight or more poets of Elizabethan days to supplement it in their *Mirror for Magistrates*. Many ballads were popular in the fifteenth century, among them *The Nut Brown Maid* and some of the *Robin Hood* ballads. Scotland had some poets, among them John Barbour, whose lengthy *The Bruce* had been published in

1375–77, and might, we should think, have stimulated a kingly poet living at that time to more patriotic song-writing. *The Bruce* did to a large degree become the fountain head of Scottish national spirit; though Scotland's royal poet of the fifteenth century, James I, could do little more than imitate in a love song the seven-lined stanzas of Chaucer. But his love song, called *The King's Quair* (Book), is the best before Spenser.

Morte d'Arthur. — In 1450, or thereabouts, came an invention of greatest importance, the invention of the printing press, — in the city of Mayence, on the continent. Through William Caxton, who had for a time lived in Belgium, the printing press was set up in England. Aside from two or three editions of the *Canterbury Tales*, the most famous book which we know to have come from his press was the *Morte d'Arthur* of Sir Thomas Malory. This book was the work of a man most talented in the power of selecting materials from multitudinous French and English stories concerning the mythical British King Arthur and his court. Yet the book, after all, is but a labyrinthine bundle of legends; and perhaps since Mark Twain's arraignment of it in *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court* we are able better than before to see that Malory was more barren in vocabulary, more lacking in humor, and weaker in the power to portray character than has often been said. He should have studied Chaucer more and badly written legends less. Still, by gathering all this material into one book he made it easier for Tennyson and others in later times to achieve some of their successes in story-telling.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Name the principal tribes of people which formed the inhabitants of England before the Norman Conquest.

2. Into what parts may Anglo-Saxon literature be divided?

3. Give the chief points of interest in the story of *Beowulf*.

4. How many Christian epics of importance were written during the Anglo-Saxon period? Name them, and tell what at least one of them was about.

5. Name the chief Anglo-Saxon scholars. Which of them is of greatest interest to you?

6. Who were the Normans, and what share did they have in the making of English literature?

7. Why was Layamon an important writer?

8. What do you know of the story of Gawain and the Green Knight?

9. Name two of the works of William Langland.

10. For what was Wycliffe noted?

11. Name one of the works of John Gower. When did he live?

12. (*a*) In what century did Chaucer live? (*b*) What was his chief work? (*c*) What did that work aim to do?

13. Name seven of the principal characters in Chaucer's chief work.

14. What effect did Chaucer have upon the language of the English?

15. What do you know of the work of John Lydgate? Of Sir Thomas Malory?

16. What type of literature was most prominent during the Anglo-Saxon and Middle-English period?

READING LIST FOR THE ANGLO-SAXON AND MIDDLE-ENGLISH PERIOD

Beowulf. Translated into modern rhymes by H. M. Lumsden.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Translated into modern English by James Ingram.

Old English Ballads. Edited by Francis B. Gummere.

Gawain and the Green Knight. Retold in modern prose by Jessie L. Weston.

CHAUCER, *The Prologue, Knight's Tale*, etc. Edited by Andrew Ingraham.

SIR THOMAS MALORY, *The Book of Merlin, The Book of Balin*. Edited by Clarence G. Child.

HELPFUL BOOKS ON THE PERIOD

The History of Early English Literature, Stopford A. Brooke. (The Macmillan Company.)

The Age of Alfred, H. J. Snell. (George Bell & Sons.)

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An Introduction to English Mediæval Literature, C. S. Baldwin. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

In the Days of Chaucer, Tudor Jenks. (A. S. Barnes & Co.)

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See also Bibliography on The Epic, in Chapter IX, page 358.

CHAPTER III

RENAISSANCE LITERATURE

1500–1613

I. The "Revival of Learning"

Meaning of the word "Renaissance." — The word "Renaissance" means, literally, a new birth. With a little less degree of literalness it has come to mean a revival of anything long in decay or in disuse. As applied to a movement in history, it means the movement which marks the transition from the medieval to the modern time, a movement which was distinguished for both a revival of classical, especially ancient Greek, learning, and, along with that learning, an intense interest in all art and literature. This historical movement came first in Italy, as early as the fourteenth century, and reached its height there in the last years of the fifteenth century and the first few years of the sixteenth. After the taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, a great number of Greek scholars fled westward from that city and added much impetus to the renaissance movement all over western Europe.

General features of the beginning of the Renaissance in England. — It was not until the sixteenth century that the renaissance movement began directly and strongly to influence England. Chaucer in the fourteenth century had come into contact with the early Renaissance through his Italian studies. Yet he was not so much interested in individual details of life as were the Italian men of the Renaissance. While Chaucer

vividly portrayed individual characters, and was interested to some extent in the importance of every individual incident, and situation, and thing, just as the men of the Renaissance were, yet he seems to have directed his attention more to the group than to the individual, for his characters were Knight, Parson, Man-of-Law, Priest, Plowman, Merchant, and the like, or *representatives* of types, rather than individuals with "given" names.

But at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Crusades were over, those great military expeditions from the nations of Europe made to the Holy Land to deliver the sepulcher of Christ from the hands of the Turks. All that the Crusaders had brought back of new thoughts and wider visions of life from the East was being absorbed by the rest of the people of western Europe. Many inventions — of gunpowder, of the mariner's compass, of the printing press — made people come together in larger numbers in war, made sea commerce more safe, and made more rapid the spread of ideas. The scholars from Constantinople stimulated Italy first, and then through Italy stimulated the people of other nations, to an interest in the arts, the literature, and the philosophy of ancient Greece and Rome, and in the quite advanced science of the Arabians. Men began to become more liberal and kindly in their attitude and thought concerning others, and the art of living together, which is civilization, advanced with great strides. England, since the days of Edward I, who reigned from 1272 to 1307, had been a well-unified state. And under Henry VII, a Welshman of the Tudor family who came to the throne in 1485 after the overthrow of Richard III of the house of York, the way had been opened for the union of Scotland with England. All classes of people, including royalty itself, became subject to the law of the land, and hence a new era of

unified interests began. Furthermore, with the beginning of the sixteenth century the voyages of Sebastian Cabot laid the foundations of England's colonial empire. The thoughts of men began to widen, and became ready for the makers of literature to lead and to inspire them.

The "Oxford Reformers." — Now about this time many English scholars, eager for greater learning, went from Oxford University to Italy, especially to the fair city of Florence. Among these scholars was one named John Colet. Colet found in Florence a great awakening of mental life under the pressure and inspiration which learned Jews and Greeks were bringing from farther east. He found there also a rather well-advanced movement for making over, or re-forming, the Christian Church and its beliefs. John Colet came back to England inspired by both the new learning and the zeal for reform.

A fellow worker with John Colet was Thomas More, — gentle, lovable, happy Thomas More, — who afterwards became *Sir* Thomas More and Chancellor to the crown. Another fellow worker was Erasmus, who had been a student in the University of Paris, France, but who had come to Oxford University, England, to study Greek, because he was too poor to go to Italy to do so. These three men stood foremost in learning and culture in the England of that day, the time of Henry VIII. There were also many other wise and brilliant and hard-working scholarly men in the University of Oxford, and out of it, too, who, only a little less than these three, were a part of the new movement towards better thinking and better living.

1. *To Spenser*

When Henry VIII came to the throne in 1509, he was a musician, a scholar, a good business man, a generous and open-hearted character in almost every way, whatever in his later

life he turned out to be. The three scholars we have mentioned found him a sympathetic helper. With his encouragement, Erasmus wrote a book entitled *The Christian Prince;* and More wrote one which he called *Utopia.* The Italian historian and political thinker, Machiavelli, had already written a book which is still very noted, under the title of *The Prince.* Machiavelli's book was written at a time when Italy was seething with political turmoil because of the almost uncontrolled power exercised by warring nobles. Machiavelli, therefore, had advocated unlimited power in the hands of one man as Prince of the commonwealth, who would bend every element of the state to the working out of his superior will. But Erasmus and More were living in a realm in which, for the time, at least, a fairer condition prevailed. Erasmus advocated the guiding of a ruler's actions by the *Golden Rule.* Sir Thomas More urged a similar course, asking that all property be held in common by the people as a whole, and that the election of all priests as well as all magistrates be by the ballot of the people. Colet preached more than he wrote, but along with Erasmus and More undertook to reform the theological system of the day, the scholastic system, and the feudal system of the political and landowning caste.

The Religious Reformation. — In the days of the "Oxford Reformers" there was occurring upon the continent of Europe what in European history is called "The Reformation." This movement was largely under the leadership of Martin Luther, a Saxon monk. But, just as the Englishmen agreed with the Italian Machiavelli in the need for political reform, yet differed with him in the manner of its being achieved, so, while they agreed with Luther in the chief of his doctrines, that of justification by faith, and urged with him that true worship was of the heart and not of ceremonies, yet they disagreed with many

other of the doctrines which Luther had derived from St. Augustine. So it came about that both political and religious reforms took a different course from that followed upon the continent. In the meantime, for all Europe, the progress of reform was complicated by the fact that some able Italians, holding as strongly as Luther or the Oxford reformers to the doctrine of justification by faith alone and aided to some degree by Pope Paul III, attempted to make over the Roman Catholic Church from *within;* but their attempt was checked at the Council of Trent in 1545 by the new and powerful society of the Jesuits. However, before the date of this council, England, as early as 1529, had broken permanently away from the Papal control, though the immediate occasion for the royal leadership in the break was not all a matter of religious and ecclesiastical conviction and policy; it was partly personal and secular. All of these things were the beginnings of the great wave which finally broke in the French Revolution of 1789.

Tyndale's Bible. — The most important literary, as well as religious, event of the last years of Henry's reign was one that we should expect to come from the current turmoil. We should expect it as the result of the endeavor to give to all the people privileges which had hitherto belonged to the few. This event was the sanctioning, in 1536, of the use, in all churches, of the translation of the Scriptures which was made by William Tyndale and revised by Miles Coverdale. Mr. Arnold Bennett has said that the secret of England's greatness lies in the familiarity of the people with the family Bible. It had been Tyndale's ambition to see that the Scriptures in English should be in the hands of even every English plowboy. And he very nearly attained that goal. Furthermore, his translation of the *New Testament* was made in 1525 in Antwerp, and because that city along with Bruges was the center of the commerce

of Europe in that century, it circulated from there, not in England alone, but also very widely throughout the whole continent of Europe. His was the best translation since that of Ælfric, in the old Anglo-Saxon days. It was the best, chiefly because the translator tried to get the sense of the passages rather than to carry over literally the Hebrew and the Greek words into their dictionary equivalents in English.

Lyric verse. — The first half of the sixteenth century was marked by a revival of interest in lyric verse as well as in political and religious writings. Sir Thomas Wyatt, the elder, was a writer of good and stirring satirical humor. As is usually the case with English humor, his had always in view a serious and practical end. Tennyson has described the inner spirit of this man in the following way:

> Courtier of many courts, — he loved the more
> His own grey towers, plain life, and lettered peace,
> To read and rhyme in solitary fields,
> The lark above, the nightingale below
> And answer them in song.

His son, also Sir Thomas Wyatt, wrote many fanciful love songs, as did Henry Howard, the Earl of Surrey. The " Songs and Sonnets " of these two men, Surrey and the younger Wyatt, were published in 1557, along with many other similar poems, in a collection known as *Tottel's Miscellany*, by a man named Richard Tottel. This was the beginning of the legion of poetic anthologies in English.

Then came the great days of Queen Elizabeth. Lyric poetry continued in the work of Sir Philip Sidney, of Sir Walter Raleigh, and of Edmund Spenser, as well as scattered itself here and there among the dramatic writings of the time.

Sidney has always been looked back to as the ideal of the age of chivalry. The outward events of his life and the inner fineness

of his character gave every reason for the charm which his character and life have exerted since his day. Before the dramatists of the day began their greater works, Sidney stood as second in literary fame to Spenser alone. His *Astrophel and Stella* sonnets rise to the first rank among sonnets of love. Perhaps no one of them is better than this, —

> Stella, think not that I by verse seek fame,
> Who seek, who hope, who love, who live by thee;
> Thine eyes my pride, thy lips mine history;
> If thou praise not, all other praise is shame.
> Nor so ambitious am I, as to frame
> A nest for my young praise in laurel tree:
> In truth, I wish not there should be
> Graved in my epitaph a Poet's name.
> Nor, if I would, could I just title make,
> That any laud thereof to me should grow,
> Without my plumes from others' wings I take:
> For nothing from my wit or will doth flow,
> Since all my words thy beauty doth indite,
> And Love doth hold my hand, and makes me write.

Stella, the " star " of his love life, was Penelope Devereux, of the family of the Earl of Essex, and the word " Astrophel " is a Greek combination meaning star-lover. John Richard Green in his *History of the English People* has called attention (in the very famous character sketch which he draws of Queen Elizabeth) to the love of anagrams in that day. " Astrophel " is an illustration, for it is but a disguise of Sidney's own name. Philip Sidney was changed slightly into Philisides, a Greek-Latin combination, and this was transformed into the pure Greek compound which means, as we have said, star-lover. Sidney was the author of much excellent prose. His prose romance, *Arcadia*, richly poetical in its imagery, was one of the most

thoughtfully witty writings of the time. His essay entitled a *Defence of Poesy* is used to this day in the schools, at times, for the same purposes as a textbook is used.

Raleigh wrote poetry well enough to warrant Spenser's calling him the " Summer's Nightingale." The melancholy of Raleigh's tone, no doubt, accounted in part for such an allusion. The most quoted lines from Raleigh are these:

Even such is Time, that takes on trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who, in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days.
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
The Lord will raise me up, I trust.

General Literature. — Like Sidney, Raleigh was also a writer of prose. His account of his voyage to the Orinoco, under the title *The Discovery of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana*, is available still in popular collections and libraries; but his *History of the World*, beginning with the Creation (a custom among early historians which Washington Irving finely satirizes in his *Knickerbocker History*), and continuing down to the second Macedonian War, B.C. 168, is the first strong indication of the enlargement of the interest of the English mind in matters that were far beyond the personal interests of the Englishman himself. Raleigh's own unfortunate career shadows the work occasionally, as in the concluding magnificent apostrophe:

"Oh, eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world, and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty,

and ambition of man, and covered it over with these two narrow words — *Hic Jacet.*"

Much popular ballad writing was done at this time, these Ballads serving the purpose of the newspaper of to-day both in giving information of current events and in critical comment upon them. There was much writing of patriotic poetry, notably the *Ballad of Agincourt*, the meter of which Tennyson employed in *The Charge of the Light Brigade.* There was also some satirical poetry of worth, especially that of Donne, about whom Lowell in the nineteenth century became so enthusiastic, and that of William Drummond of Hawthornden. Hobbes and Locke were anticipated in their thinking upon political science by Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke. Love poets were very numerous. Many of their more fantastic productions were collected in the *Paradise of Dainty Devices*, published in 1576, nine years after *Tottel's Miscellany.* Translations which remain as among the best ever done into English were made of Homer by George Chapman, of the *Essays* of Montaigne by John Florio, of Plutarch by Sir Thomas North, of Ariosto and Tasso by Harrington and Fairfax, respectively. To understand how great a work that of Chapman's was, one need only read the essay by James Russell Lowell upon Chapman, and the ode by John Keats entitled, *On first looking into Chapman's Homer:*

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer rul'd as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;

Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific — and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise —
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

Then there was the popular theological literature represented by John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, bringing literature to the very hearts and minds of the lowest peasants; and the learned theological literature, such as the book which, next to the Bible, was the source of the style of John Ruskin, namely, Richard Hooker's *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, a defense of the Church against the Puritans and " the first monument of splendid literary prose that we possess." History was represented by Raphael Holinshed, in his *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, published in 1577, and furnishing later the " arguments," as the outlines of the stories were called, for some of the " histories " by Shakespeare, and for those by many others before him. Love stories were translated into English prose by the score. A collection made in 1566 by William Painter, and called *The Palace of Pleasure*, was sold at every bookstall in the kingdom. Tragic poems relating the misadventures of famous characters were printed in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, on the model furnished by Boccaccio and imitated in the fifteenth century by Lydgate. The name of Thomas Sackville, who was at first the Earl of Dorset and later Lord Bockhurst, is the chief one to associate with this collection. It was he, too, who, along with Thomas Norton, brought forth the first quite serious attempt at tragedy in the English drama. Their play was called *Gorboduc*. A crude affair it was, both in the bloodiness of its events and in the extravagance of its style. Nevertheless it was notable even in style, for in it the authors marked an epoch by the employment of blank verse, for centuries afterwards accepted as the best form for the expression of tragic

emotion. Interludes, pageants, and to some extent masques, with still other forms of stage plays, were almost innumerable from this time on.

Bacon. — Then there were the *Essays* of Sir Francis Bacon, 1597. Bacon was a scientist, a traveler, a philosopher, a statesman, and a man of letters. He was also a good speaker. Ben Jonson said of him: "He was full of gravity in his speaking. No man ever spake more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss. He commanded where he spake; and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end."

Bacon once wrote that he had taken all knowledge as his province, that he desired to clear the field of knowledge of all frivolous and useless theorizing and unscientific experimentation, and to stimulate invention. It was a large and a difficult task that he set himself, but to him "Difficulty is a severe instructor, set over us by the supreme ordinance of a parental guardian and legislator, who knows us better than we know ourselves, as he loves us better, too." He wanted men to follow definite inquiries, and make direct experiments. The kind of thing that Benjamin Franklin did later, searching after hitherto unknown causes by working among known and definite effects, as in the case of sending up kites into the thunder-clouds, was precisely what Bacon approved; and it was under his stimulus that science was born again. Nature, he taught men, is a great quarry in which men should employ their minds as tools to secure therefrom truths which might be formed into the things that will be of use to man. This, he thought, men should do instead

of doing as the philosophers so often did, namely, turning their logical wits round and round and in and about their empty minds. He wrote much, both in Latin and in English; but it is his essays alone that have been widely read. They are much admired, and are eminently worthy of that admiration. They present the high thinking of a moralist, a statesman, and a man of general affairs. Bacon was born about three years earlier than Shakespeare, and lived ten years later. In intellect he was, we think, the second man of his day, Shakespeare alone standing superior to him.

Euphuism. — Two books by John Lyly, *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit*, and its sequel, *Euphues and his England*, are indispensable to one who wishes to study the manners and customs of the Elizabethan era. Besides social manners, love and education and religion were topics which were treated in these books by Lyly. His style was so distinctive that a name has been coined to describe it, — "Euphuism." This style was characterized by balance of phrase, which indicated contrasts of thought, by alliteration, which marked the balanced phrases over against each other, by unending fantastic similes, drawn largely from pseudo-science, and even by rhymed prose. The style had great influence upon Lyly's contemporaries and his immediate successors. Even Shakespeare falls into it frequently, however much he may ridicule it through the mouth of Holofernes, the pedant in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Furthermore, it was of great value in the development of English prose style, because of the effect it had in the bringing about of more symmetry in the English sentence, though it was badly overdone by Lyly himself. Lyly owed much of his form and its embellishments to Latin writers, especially Cicero and the elder Pliny; hence the well-balanced phrases. Sidney's *Arcadia* was more free in style, and soon supplanted the *Euphues* in favor.

II. Edmund Spenser

His importance. — "The Nobility of the Spencers has been illustrated and enriched by the trophies of Marlborough; but I exhort them to consider the Faerie Queen as the most precious jewel of their coronet." Thus the historian Gibbon spoke of the illustrious family of Northamptonshire, named the Spencers, and of the principal work of their kinsman, Edmund Spenser.

His lesser works. — The first publication worthy of note from the pen of Spenser was the *Shepherd's Calendar*, in 1579, a poem in twelve "eclogues," one for each month of the year. It is an artificial thing, as any eclogue, or poem representing sophisticated city folk under the guise of shepherds or of any other plain country folk, is sure to be. It is artificial also, for it is written, as to a greater or less degree was all this author's work, according to a theory that all poetic wording acquires some of its beauty from being taken, not from the popular speech of the time, but from that which is at least slightly archaic or old. Then, in addition to this, there is an attempt in the poem to return to the Old English alliterative form. Yet the poem is genuine in its feeling, for it sprang from a painfully real personal experience, — the author's falling in love with some fair lady with whom it was impossible for him to become intimately friendly. The *Shepherd's Calendar* was dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney.

Spenser's *Mother Hubberd's Tale* is a poem of 1388 lines in the ten-syllable rhyming couplet employed by Chaucer in the *Canterbury Tales*. It is vigorous and vivacious. The *Tale* is a fable, in which an Ape and a Fox, meaning imitation and cunning, tiring of earning a living by labor, resolve to resort to their wits. The relation of the adventures which follow is not bitter or malicious in tone, as satires usually are, particularly British

political satires, yet in the keenness of the arraignment which is made of the military, clerical, and courtly vices and follies of the day, it is unsurpassed. The poem is one of universal import, for impudent pretense is the same in all times and places in human society as well as in the beastly kingdom. Evidence of this sameness in human society lies in the fact that during the reign of George III, one year after the close of the Revolutionary War in America, that part of the poem which dealt with the coalition ministry formed by Sir Reynold Fox under King Ape, was reprinted and dedicated to the prime minister, the Honorable Charles James Fox. Perhaps next to the *Faerie Queen*, *Mother Hubberd's Tale* is the best of Spenser's poems.

Too much neglected is the *Fate of the Butterfly*. Two episodes in this poem, the one relating the origin of the unmatchable beauty of the wings of the butterfly race, and the other explaining the cause of the poisonous rancor and hate which the spiders bear to the butterflies, are extraordinarily delicate, glad-hearted, and lovely. It is such passages as these that make of literature a

sweet inn from care and wearisome turmoil.

Spenser's next important poem was *Colin Clout's Come Home Again*, 1595. This poem was written in celebration of the author's return to Ireland, after an absence of some time in England, and it gives the reason for his making the journey away from the fair country which had for so long been his adopted home. It was the "Shepherd of the Ocean," Sir Walter Raleigh, the poem tells, who induced the land shepherd, Colin Clout, to make the journey to England, in order that his talent for poesy, so richly enjoyed by Raleigh, should not remain hidden forever in the obscurity of his own household. So he had sailed to the goodly realm of the great Queen. The most interesting parts of the poem are two. The first part, which is

an answer to the question who else besides himself gave delight at court with the notes of their musical verse, includes a description of various poets and other literary men then living in England, among them Shakespeare,

> Whose Muse, full of high thoughts' invention,
> Doth like himself *heroically* sound.

The second part seems to renew the impassioned devotion of the poet to his early love, Rosalind, —

> Ah, far be it (quoth Colin Clout) from me,
> That I of gentle maids should ill deserve:
> For that myself I do profess to be
> Vassal to one, whom all my days I serve;
> The beam of beauty sparkled from above,
> The flower of virtue and pure chastity,
> The blossom of sweet joy and perfect love,
> The pearl of peerless grace and modesty:
> To her my thoughts I daily dedicate,
> To her my heart I nightly martyrize,
> To her my love I lowly do prostrate,
> To her my life I wholly sacrifice:
> My thought, my heart, my love, my life, is she.

Astrophel, an elegy upon the death of "the most noble and valorous knight, Sir Philip Sidney," was included in the same volume with *Colin Clout's Come Home Again*. Another volume in the same year, 1595, contained the eighty-eight Sonnets entitled *Amoretti*, and a noble Marriage Ode entitled *Epithalamion*.

The *Prothalamion* was printed in 1596, and is a song in honor of the marriage of two daughters of the Earl of Worcester. In this year also came the four hymns in celebration of Love and Beauty, two written as if the author were in the rawness of youth and two in maturity. Then four short "Anacreontic"

poems and four sonnets complete the list of his poetic output. After his death there appeared a prose work entitled *A View of the State of Ireland, dialogue-wise.*

In January, 1598, Spenser died in London, broken-hearted, impoverished, if not starving, because of personal sorrows and deprivations arising from serious insurrectionary outbreaks in Ireland. He was buried, as he desired and deserved, near the tomb of Chaucer, in Westminster Abbey.

The Faerie Queen. —

A GENTLE KNIGHT was pricking on the plain,
Clad in mighty arms and silver shield,
Wherein old dints of deep wounds did remain,
The cruel marks of many a bloody field;
Yet arms till that time did he never wield:
His angry steed did chide his foaming bit,
As much disdaining to the curb to yield:
Full jolly knight he seemed, and fair did sit,
As one for knightly jousts and fierce encounters fit.

. . . . . .

A lovely LADY rode him fair beside,
Upon a lowly ass more white than snow;
Yet she much whiter; but the same did hide
Under a veil, that wimpled was full low;
And over all a black stole she did throw;
As one that inly mourned, so was she sad,
And heavy sat upon her palfrey slow;
Seemed in her heart some hidden care she had;
And by her in a line a milk-white lamb she lad.
So pure and innocent, as that same lamb,
She was in life and every virtuous lore;
And by descent from royal lineage came
Of ancient kings and queens, that had of yore
Their sceptres stretched from east to western shore,
And all the world in their subjection held.

. . . . . .

Behind her far away a DWARF did lag,
That lazy seemed, in being ever last,
Or wearied with bearing of her bag
Of needments at his back.

Thus begins, almost out of place, out of time, the *Faerie Queen*, a poem in six books, each book containing twelve cantos. As it stands, the *Faerie Queen* is more than three times the length of *Paradise Lost*, — a single "book" of the former being more than half the entire length of the latter. Had Spenser lived to carry out the plan which he contemplated and twelve books of twelve cantos each been written, one of the most gigantic undertakings in the whole history of poetry would have been achieved by its author.

Under date of December 1, 1589, in the registry of the Stationers' Company at London there is this entry, —

The Fayrye Queene
disposed into XII Books

An edition later than the original was prefaced by Spenser with the dedication: "To the most high, mighty, and magnificent Empress, renowned for piety, virtue, and all gracious government, ELIZABETH, by the grace of God, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, and of Virginia, Defender of the Faith, etc. Her most humble servant, EDMUND SPENSER, doth in all humility dedicate, present, and consecrate these labours, to live with the eternity of HER fame."

Each of the six books which were completed has one general subject, one hero, and one heroine. For example, the subject of the first book is Holiness; its hero is the Knight of the Red Cross, or of Holiness, Saint George; and its heroine is the lovely, pure, and heavenly minded lady, Una. Yet each book is but a part of the whole poem; each furnishes illustration of

one great virtue, and all of these virtues are gradually seen to pertain to the characters of but the two who are the hero and the heroine of the poem as a whole, — Prince Arthur, who in his entire person represents Magnificence, and Gloriana, the Queen of Fairy Land, who in her person represents Glory. The books merge into one another, — as in the case of the third and fourth, for example, which treat separately of Chastity and Friendship, and yet, taken together, become a treatment of Love. Of the virtues represented in the six books, that in the first is Holiness, in the second Temperance, in the third Chastity, in the fourth Friendship, in the fifth Justice, and in the sixth Courtesy.

One may read too much of Spenser at one time; the richness of the sweet rhymes may begin to cloy. The picture-making or describing power of Spenser's imagination was stronger than the narrative power of that imagination. Yet according to Milton he was " the sage and serious Spenser." And that he was; for while in this extraordinary and beautiful allegory he reflects the characteristics and the events of his own day, yet the reflecting mirror is one for all days. For example, in the fifth book he describes the struggle with the Giant, who is none other than some political mountebank whom Spenser himself saw, and yet who anticipates the theories and practices of many a twentieth-century demagogue. In fact, in this book Spenser delineates characters, one after another, who are really Raleigh, Sidney, Cecil, Philip II, and Queen Elizabeth; and yet some men and women of any later day might be described in almost identical terms. Spenser wrote *from* his own time, but he wrote *for* all time. And it is doubtful whether any other one long poem in the English language more richly rewards its study than his *Faerie Queen*. The young may enjoy it for its wonderful pictures of the age of Chivalry, for its stirring magic, and for its enchanting tales; and the mature can find within its lines the

image of their own very souls. Not pictures only are here; here, too, may be found those things which ever more are needed, — faith, energy, courage, devotion.

The poem is also full of wise saws, such as

> A dram of sweet is worth a pound of sour,

and

> What needeth me
> To covet more than I have cause to use?

and

> Gather therefore the rose whilst yet is prime.

It is full of similes as perfect as those of Dante, — one of them is

> And troubled blood through his pale face was seen
> To come and go, with tidings from the heart,
> As it a running messenger had been.

It is packed with earnest, poignant desire for the good of man, —

> God help the man so wrapt in Error's endless train.

In this poem Spenser wrote of Chaucer as

> The well of English undefiled,
> On Fame's eternal bead-roll to be filed.

There is no poem in any language better adapted to inculcate in the reader the sense of the beautiful.

III. The Drama to Shakespeare

The spirit of the Renaissance. — While in the spirit of Spenser there was a vast deal of sentimentality surviving from medieval times, yet it may easily be seen that he went far into the depths of human passion and human moral conduct. But it was not Spenser who among English men of letters went most deeply into the recesses of man's spirit. It was the Elizabethan dramatists,

especially Shakespeare in such studies as those he made of Lady Macbeth, Othello, and Cleopatra, who pushed the analysis of the soul of the human being beyond any limits reached before or since. It cannot be said that even modern scientific psychology has attained the power of insight that is revealed in the tragedies of Shakespeare.

The Renaissance brought men into contact with the great writings of the past, and it also stimulated writers by the geographical discoveries that were contemporary with them. The influence of past writings and of the contemporary enlargement of the world by geographical discovery was immense. But England during the Dark Ages had not suffered so deeply from oppression and from ignorance as had the nations on the continent. Hence the new ideas of the Renaissance did not, despite their immense influence, sweep Englishmen quite so fully off their feet as they did men in Italy, Germany, Spain, and even France. In England the Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century went hand in hand in their influence upon the people. Hence in the myriad-minded Shakespeare, while there is enough and to spare of renaissance extravagance, yet there is also again and again emphasis upon the modern idea that man must exert his highest powers through his own character if he desires to attain salvation for himself and for others both here and hereafter.

Love of the beautiful, freedom of thought, straightforward directness, many-sidedness, and " modern-ness " of viewpoint are the features of the late Renaissance and the early modern time in English literature.

An analysis of the literature of England since the influence of the Italian Renaissance entered into its stream would show that influence to be less than the influence of the ocean voyages and discoveries of the period of Elizabeth. The great gray flood

of the sea has permeated with its flavor and its tone every age of art in England. "Without the voyagers," it has been said, "Marlowe is inconceivable." Without the writers of the stories collected by Richard Hakluyt and added to by Samuel Purchas, of the winning of the world by the adventurous voyagers, and without Marlowe, too, Shakespeare is inconceivable.

The effect of the spirit of freedom upon the language of these men was incalculably great; hence it was great upon the language of ourselves. They used language as they pleased; but fortunately they were always pleased to use it in such way as would most efficiently accomplish the conveying of what they wished to convey. It has even been said that these men were language mad; but if they were, it was the madness of genius, which, as Emerson says, is simply "the power to labor better and more availably," for their language does what they intended it to do. If, like Spenser, they preferred archaic English, they employed it. (Ben Jonson said of Spenser that he used no language at all!) If, like the schoolmasters at the universities (such as Sir John Cheke and Roger Ascham and Nicholas Udall who, though eminent classical scholars, fought for "our own tongue, clean, pure, unmixed, and unmangled with the borrowing of other tongues"), they desired to use the current correct English, — they employed it. And if they preferred to spangle their pages with "borrowings" from the Latin tongue, as Shakespeare in

> When the extravagant and erring spirit hies to his confine.

they took and used what they preferred. With this language they both held the mirror up to nature for themselves and for us, and provided the means for so enlisting our attention that we are taken out of ourselves, our troubles and self-centered interests, and made to live in our own minds the lives of others.

The earlier antecedents of the Shakespearean drama. — Shakespeare, " the light that was to shine over many lands," was the greatest product of the Renaissance. But before we come to him, if we would understand the form of literature with which he is chiefly associated, that is, the Drama, we should go back into history a little way.

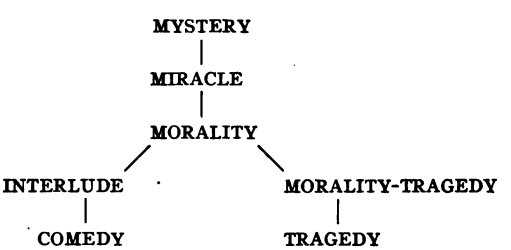
Of the three great epochs in dramatic history, the Greek, the Spanish, and the English, the last was the most fruitful in varied types and the richest in quantity. All drama results from the play impulse which exists in all vital things and from the fact that men's attention is most readily attracted and held by action, or by something in motion. These are the general psychological sources of drama. The English drama, of course, resulted from this impulse and this fact; but more directly from the desire of the priesthood to influence the common people more speedily and more powerfully than in religious matters they were influencing them. They thought they could do this, first, by opposing the influences of the pagan drama of old Greece and Rome, and, second, by impressing the people with the importance of the Biblical stories. The liturgy of the mass of the Roman Catholic Church already existed as a public performance. It was a ready step from that to the acting of Biblical stories in the church and then out in the open air upon a raised platform or up in a wagon where the people could see the acting well. A Biblical story thus acted was called a mystery, or mystery play. It had to do with the mysterious doctrines of life, death, and the great hereafter, which were associated with the character and deeds of the Scriptural personages. The Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau in modern times is an illustration of this sort of dramatic play.

The extension of the subject matter to include the legends connected with the lives of the saints of the Church brought

the miracle, or miracle play, into vogue. It is doubtful if the priests and the people of that day distinguished between mystery and miracle in this way, but the distinction has now become a convenient one to mark the growing change in subject matter. No doubt the miracle plays became popular with the priests themselves because of some hesitation about the sacredness of publicly assuming the characters of the Scriptures as they had to do in the mysteries. The mysteries were not allowed to become extinct, however, for the trade guilds took them up, both for amusement and for money making.

For the sake of variety and of subtlety, too, the Biblical and legendary stories were, — not abandoned altogether, — but less and less used, and *symbolical* characters, some of which had already begun to be used in the mysteries and miracles, came to absorb almost the whole of the interest; and thus arose what are called moralities, or moral plays. *Everyman* is the moral play best known to the public of to-day. The moralities were allegories intended to teach men to live better lives, the dramatic conflict in them being between the good and the bad in typical men. The religious ideas of the mystery play were now merged into the ideas of practical morality.

How did the Shakespearean play derive itself from all this rather remote form and these rather direct purposes of the mystery, the miracle, and the morality? In this way, —



The step from the morality to true drama was an easy one. Substitute worldly personages for the allegorical characters, and, for the religious or moral purpose, substitute any motive that might rule the life of these personages, and let it work joy or havoc among them, let it proceed by comic scenes to a pleasant ending or through tragic scenes to a fatal and terrible ending, and let this all be placed before the spectator clothed in the power and beauty of poetry, and there exists the drama of Marlowe and of Shakespeare. It was genius alone which could so clothe these personages, their motives, and their actions; but independence of thought and industry could provide the material for this poetic expression.

Some intermediate work was done between the morality and the real drama, as the table given suggests. We know that mysteries were performed in England as early as 1119, and that moralities had become very popular as early as the reign of the first Tudor, Henry VII, who came to the throne in 1485. Then during the reigns of Henry VIII and of Mary it came to be the fashion in the intervals of banquets and of other pastimes to bring forward players who would deliver dialogue, which usually arose from some comic situation and revealed the nature of certain characters by their grouping and by the contrasts brought out in their sayings. This was a peculiarly English fashion, though it corresponded somewhat to an ancient Latin one known as *Disputationes*. The English called it an *Interlude*. The best-known writer of the interlude was John Heywood, probably its originator. When he used the interlude not merely for a pastime but for religious satire, he was exiled.

Before Heywood there had already existed a comic element in the morality. Even in the mystery and in the miracle play the Devil had been a prominent character, and with him had come to be associated a constant attendant known as the Vice. In

the morality the Vice became very much a buffoon. Now, when we take this comic element represented by the antics and sayings of the Vice (later the "fool"), and when we take also the power of characterization by means of dialogue alone which Heywood showed in the interlude, all that is lacking for the production of a comedy is the construction of a plot. The Latin models, poor as they were, and imitative of the more degenerate days of the Greek comedy, nevertheless furnished the suggestion for plot; and before 1551 Nicholas Udall, head master of Eton, wrote *Ralph Roister Doister*, bringing the grotesquerie and the allegorical method of the middle ages into actual life, by taking a cowardly and vain-glorious braggart as the chief character, and telling the story of his courtship and rejection. This is usually known as the first English comedy.

Comedy came before tragedy, for two reasons: (1) it has a quicker appeal to a wider audience; and (2) the fun-making scenes in the moralities were really foreign to the underlying purpose of the moralities, and could be easily detached and acted alone. Detaching them, stripping them of their merely allegorical method, and forming their material into plot, made the comedy, and made at least a crude one very easily.

The first English tragedy we have already mentioned. It was called *Gorboduc*. It was performed at Whitehall before the Queen, in 1561. As the comedy sprang in England from the fun-making scenes of the moralities, so the tragedy was derived from the seriously sacred parts of the mysteries and miracle plays and from the sober moral idea of the moralities. Not the recklessness or the comic enmeshments of life, as in the comedy, but the seriously responsible moments of life make up the subject matter of the tragedy. Tragedy is the record of a fatal event. The Chronicle histories, such as those of Raphael Holinshed and his contemporary, Edward Hall, were filled

with the stories of the great, whose downward careers Aristotle had said are the proper material for tragedy, and whose descent from "high to low degree," Chaucer had also said, gave "tragedie" its content. The Latin writer, Seneca, provided the model — not a very good one, as we have already said — for the construction of dramatic plot. Surrey and Wyatt had made blank verse popular. And the result of all was that *Gorboduc* was produced. Its authors were Norton, the eminent lawyer, and Sackville, the learned courtier. Sidney in his *Defence of Poesy* praised the play very highly. It seems extremely crude to us to-day.

Soon a second tragedy appeared, — *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, by Thomas Hughes. Dumb-shows were given in pantomime before each of the acts of this and other tragedies, in order to reveal the meaning of what was to follow. Francis Bacon assisted in devising the dumb-shows for *The Misfortunes of Arthur*. In this play appears "The Ghost," which in many a later and greater play was to be the center of so much desperate mental excitement.

Between 1568 and 1580 "The Minutes of the Revels" record fifty-two plays, some of which must have been both artistic and popular. But between these and the moralities, as our table on page 70 indicates, there was an intermediate form which was hardly either morality or tragedy. It has been rather unhappily called a "hybrid"; perhaps morality-tragedy would be a better name for it and is the one we use. The *King Johan* by an author named Bale is a representative illustration. It seems to have been the first attempt to dramatize the chronicle histories. It is anticipatory, therefore, of the chronicle plays of Shakespeare. It has the same purpose as the morality, but the author of it is in the process of struggling to free himself from the allegorical method and to write as if representing life directly,

Pageants and masques were common forms of dramatic production in the Tudor days, though we have not put them into the above table because they were not essential factors in the development of the drama. It became the custom for the mystery plays to be played in parts simultaneously in various quarters of a city, say, the city of York. Each part was played upon a separate stage which was drawn about the city from gate to high cross, to hospital, and so on. The vehicle, wagon or "float," which formed the stage was called a pageant. Soon the word "pagiante" came to be applied to the show itself, and then to a whole series of shows, as at the present time. The masque was imported into England in 1513 by Henry VIII. It is a sort of halfway house from the pageant to the play, more like a modern opera than any other thing, consisting of music and dancing with much of sung and declaimed poetry, all upon a magnificent and spectacular scale involving elaborate machinery and highly colored scenic effects. A small army of mechanics and actors was necessary to the production of many of these masques; and one hundred and sixty actors were employed in at least one of them. Venetian Carnivals and Mardi Gras Processions are modern survivals of the medieval masque. Shakespeare used it in the masque of the goddesses in *The Tempest.* Other dramatists of the sixteenth century employed it, notably Ben Jonson, and Milton's noble *Comus* is the supreme example of its literary possibilities. But, after all, neither pageant nor masque was essentially fundamental, but only incidental in the evolution of the drama.

We have mentioned Bale's *King Johan* as possibly the first of the chronicle plays, sometimes called historical plays. There were many of these. Shakespeare for his material used a number of early ones, such as *The Troublesome Raigne of King John,* whose author is unknown. These early historical plays

were strong, but crude; none was really excellent until the *Edward II* of Marlowe, probably written about 1590. Historical plays were useful, as Heywood said in his *Apology for Actors*, for the instruction of the ignorant and for the refreshing of the memory of the learned as to the important facts of history and of morals. The historical plays in English literature form an almost unbroken series of studies from the accession of John to the defeat of the Spanish Armada, 1199 to 1588.

Biographical plays, such as *Sir Thomas More*, *Perkin Warbeck*, and *The Fair Maid of the West*, and plays centering about the famous gentleman called Robin Hood, were a logical accompaniment of the dramatizing of the events of the reign of an English king, — logical because it is but a step from the chief events of a reign to the chief events in the life of a man. Then a next logical step is from leading events in lives of popular heroes to such important events in the lifetime of the author as he sees in society about him. Most early plays of this last kind that were of any consequence were tales of horrible tragedies. *Arden of Feversham* is one of the few of these brutal tales which had real tragic power in them. It is " The lamentable and true tragedy of Master Arden of Feversham, in Kent, who was most wickedly murdered by the means of his disloyal and wanton wife, who, for the love she bore to one Mosbie, hired two desperate ruffians, Black Will and Shagbag, to kill him." The play has been thought by some to have been written by Shakespeare. There do appear to be some glimmerings of his mind here and there within it.

Shakespeare's immediate predecessors. — This brings us, if not to Shakespeare, to his immediate predecessors. They were Kyd, Lyly, Greene, Peele, Nash, Lodge, and Marlowe. The student who desires to establish in his mind a sense of the real existence of these men should read *Tales of the Mermaid Inn*,

by Alfred Noyes. The rhymed stories in this book are very interesting, both because of the fascinating nature of nearly all their incidents, and, more especially, because those contemporaries of the youth of Shakespeare are as much alive in them as if they were to be seen by us any day on our streets and in the active life of amusement and work about us.

Thomas Kyd made popular the "tragedy of blood," his *Spanish Tragedy* hitting the curious taste of the time with five murders, two suicides, two legal executions, and one death by duel. John Lyly's plays are inferior in value to his novels, though filled with lovely lyrics. Next to Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene was the most brilliant of these men, but went to a wretched and embittered death, unsuccessful because he was unwilling to conform to the prevalent demand for blank verse such as was used by Marlowe and Nash. His most celebrated play, *Looking-Glass for London*, was written in collaboration with Thomas Lodge, the scholarly actor-physician. George Peele is known chiefly for *The Arraignment of Paris* and for *The Old Wives' Tales*. The latter is thought by many to have been the source for Milton's *Comus;* it is as likely to be remembered by us because of the similarity of the title to that of one of the novels of Arnold Bennett. Ingenious, fluent, facetious Thomas Nash produced, among other things, *Will Summer's Testament*, and perhaps collaborated with Marlowe in at least one play.

Christopher Marlowe, better known as Kit Marlowe, was born in the same year with Shakespeare, 1564, at Canterbury. He had a creative, an original mind. The state of the drama was becoming precarious in the days of his youth. The Puritans hated any sort of amusement. The populace wanted only grotesque buffoonery or bloody melodrama; the university scholars would have nothing but imitations of the ancient

authors. Marlowe himself put the matter very mildly in his preface to *Tamburlaine* when he said that he proposed to win the people

> From jigging veins of rhyming mother wits,
> And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay.

At the age of twenty-two Marlowe made himself famous and made certain the success of the type of writing which a greater than he was soon to bring to relative perfection. Marlowe attained this distinction with the drama of *Tamburlaine*. This was the beginning of the great Romantic drama production of the Elizabethan age. It is a play with a hero, the Scythian shepherd-warrior usually known in history as Tamerlane. The character of Tamburlaine is of the earth, and yet never lets one forget that it is nearly divine in its capacities and power. The action of the story proceeds through a series of triumphs, marking crises in the life of the hero. The poetry of the play shows a genius unparalleled in its time except by one. That poetry was not dependent upon rhyme; it lay in the thought of the play and in the powerful surge of its movement. From this hour drama in England was no longer chaotic. All dramatists now knew three things: (1) what sort of material would bring dramatic effect, (2) how the play should be constructed, and (3) that unrhymed verse was the most natural form in which to express the emotional flow of the speech of dramatic characters. *Tamburlaine* was followed within six years by *Dr. Faustus*, famous enough for the lines:

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilion?

exclaimed by Faustus when Mephistopheles raised the spirit of Helen of Troy. *The Massacre at Paris*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Edward II*, all were powerful plays, but over-grandiloquent in

speech, as we should expect from a man of genius still under twenty-nine years of age. Marlowe never reached maturity, but died at twenty-nine. The maker of "Marlowe's mighty line" will always be remembered both for what he did and for what he made possible.

Lo, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!

is the cry with which Faustus starts up from his deathbed. After such a line from one who in a time of literary progress was still rather undeveloped, there may be expected great poetry to follow.

It came in "that divine apparition known to mortals as Shakespeare."

IV. William Shakespeare

The man. — Shakespeare was a busy, brilliant, much-alive man. This we know from his writings. He was also the most profound genius of the race, so far as the understanding of human nature goes. This we know from comparison of his writings with those of others who have recorded their thinking upon the human heart and intellect. His mind was a full and teeming mind, — a joyous mind in the main. He was an artist in insight, in skill, in sympathy; a great artist in power and achievement. All this we know from his writings.

We know nothing else about him which is of very great importance. He was born at Stratford-on-Avon in 1564, and died there in 1616. The house in which he was born still stands, well-preserved, — by several repairings, however, and not because time has spared it. His tomb is in the little church by the streamside, where the only authentic likeness of him may be seen. American lovers of the drama have erected an imposing but ugly theater building in the small city in memory of the great playwright. Shakespeare was married to an Anne or

ANNE HATHAWAY COTTAGE

Agnes Hathaway. The Hathaway house, with thatched roof and many sixteenth-century architectural features and much furniture of the period, charms the visitor at Shottery, a near-by village. Two daughters and one son were born to the Shakespeares.

Shakespeare became an actor in London. He worked over the plays of other men and improved them. He wrote much poetry of high quality. John Webster, a contemporary of his later years, wrote of him that he was a man of "right happy and copious industry." It is quite certain that he was an honest, shrewd, painstaking man of business, and that he became wealthy from work and investments.

Everything else told of him is more or less legendary.

The picture at the beginning of this volume represents what he looked like, we believe, as the engraving from which it is copied was made by Martin Droeshout, who was fifteen years of age at the time of Shakespeare's death.

His theater. — The theaters in which Shakespeare acted and which he partly owned were very crude affairs. The acting, though, was probably good. Much of the acting was done by boys, the women's parts being always taken by boys. "Nearly all boys can act extremely well," says Mr. John Masefield, the playwright. "Very few men and women can." No doubt a good deal of the wholesomeness and freshness of the plays of Shakespeare is due to the fact that the author had to write for such actors; for, as he tells us, the dyer's hand is colored by that wherein it works. The elaborate stage settings of to-day were unknown to the Elizabethans, though the masques came near to some of them in gorgeousness. Stirring action and sparkling or resounding speech were the things that appealed to the audience of that day; not a complicated social tableau nor a striking personal situation. Splendid costumes, however,

and lovely music and singing were employed and enthusiastically welcomed.

The playwrights of the Elizabethan days would have been astonished at the modern pretense at realism. Their business, they thought, was to produce illusion; yet to produce illusion in order that real life might be better known; and it is a curious fact that in *The Tempest*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Cymbeline*, and *Pericles*, and in such passages as Act IV, scene 3 of *As You Like It*, and Act V of *The Merchant of Venice*, all called by everybody "romantic," Shakespeare not only wrote to please himself chiefly, but came closest of all to presenting a true vision of life as it actually goes on. George Bernard Shaw says that "life as it occurs is senseless." That would seem true in books if life were pictured out in all the fullness of detail which the photographer can secure. But when "visioned," that is, when given in such form that we see both its *essential* details and their meaning in detail and as a whole, it is not senseless. Shakespeare reproduces life in this visioned manner in these "Romances" and romantic passages. Life is neither so tense, nor so concentrated, nor so idealized in details in these plays as in the Tragedies and the Comedies. The Romances — though in *Pericles* and *Cymbeline* Shakespeare did little more than sketch out the scenarios — are the most reflective of the real Shakespeare of all his plays. The theory of his word as he thought it out is best worked out in them, the theory itself being set forth in these lines from Act I of *Timon of Athens*, —

> My free drift
> Halts not particularly, but moves itself
> In a wide sea of wax: no levell'd malice
> Infects one comma in the course I hold;
> But flies an eagle flight, bold, and forth on,
> Leaving no tract behind.

THE MEMORIAL THEATRE, STRATFORD-ON-AVON

His plays. — Shakespeare wrote or had a hand in the writing of at least thirty-seven plays, the mixed authorship being most evident in *Cymbeline*, *Pericles*, and *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry VIII*. These are the thirty-seven plays:

Love's Labour's Lost
The Two Gentlemen of Verona
The Comedy of Errors
Titus Andronicus
King Henry VI, Part I
King Henry VI, Part II
King Henry VI, Part III
A Midsummer Night's Dream
Romeo and Juliet
King John
King Richard II
King Richard III
The Merchant of Venice
The Taming of the Shrew
King Henry IV, Part I
King Henry IV, Part II
King Henry V
The Merry Wives of Windsor
As You Like It
Much Ado About Nothing
Twelfth Night
All's Well that Ends Well
Julius Cæsar
Hamlet, Prince of Denmark
Troilus and Cressida
Measure for Measure
Othello, the Moor of Venice
King Lear
Macbeth
Antony and Cleopatra
Coriolanus
Timon of Athens
Pericles, Prince of Tyre
Cymbeline
The Winter's Tale
The Tempest
King Henry VIII

This order is, as nearly as can be ascertained, the order in which the plays were written, though there is a great deal of difference of opinion concerning the order. In fact, it is all very much a matter of guesswork. We know that the first part of King Henry VI was played in 1591 and that, therefore, it must have been written before that date. We know that Shakespeare died in 1616, and that, therefore, if he had any share in the writing of King Henry VIII, or any other play, it must have been before that time. We know that nothing was known in Europe about the Bermuda Islands (mentioned in *The Tempest*) before 1609, and that, therefore, Shakespeare could not

have written *The Tempest* before that date. But to determine the dates of the plays, as is often attempted, by the moods of the man at certain ages in his life, gets us nowhere; for it is generally acknowledged that the plays were all written between 1589 and 1613, and it is quite possible for a man to have many very similar moods between the ages of 25 and 50. The important thing about them is not their dates, but that nothing in literature has come from an Anglo-Saxon mind so great as these dramas. From the hour of their production until now they have been the world's greatest treasure house both of entertainment and of wisdom, — and, together with the Bible, of inspiration.

Many other plays are asserted to have come from the hand of this author, among them *Cardenna*, *Edward III*, *Arden of Feversham*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and some scenes added in 1602 to Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*. There seems little ground for doubt that he had a hand in the writing of *The Two Noble Kinsmen;* but there are good reasons for doubting that he had anything to do with the others, the best of all of these reasons being that these plays do not *sound* like anything else we know him to have done.

The plays may be grouped into Comedies, Chronicle Plays, Tragedies, and Romances.

The COMEDIES are twelve in number, —

Love's Labour's Lost
The Two Gentlemen of Verona
The Comedy of Errors
A Midsummer Night's Dream
The Merchant of Venice
The Taming of the Shrew
The Merry Wives of Windsor
As You Like It
Much Ado About Nothing
Twelfth Night
All's Well that Ends Well
Measure for Measure

The CHRONICLE PLAYS, ten,—

King Henry VI, Part I
King Henry VI, Part II
King Henry VI, Part III
King John

King Richard II
King Richard III
King Henry IV, Part I
King Henry IV, Part II
King Henry V
King Henry VIII

The TRAGEDIES, ten,—

Titus Andronicus
Romeo and Juliet
Julius Cæsar
Hamlet, Prince of Denmark
Othello, the Moor of Venice
King Lear
Macbeth
Antony and Cleopatra
Coriolanus
Timon of Athens

The ROMANCES, five,—

Troilus and Cressida
Pericles, Prince of Tyre
Cymbeline
The Winter's Tale
The Tempest

The order of writing the *groups* was, in general, probably this: Comedies, Chronicle Plays, Tragedies, Romances. There are exceptions to this probable order, in each group; for *Troilus and Cressida*, a romance, was written before at least six of the tragedies; *Measure for Measure*, a comedy, was written after some of the tragedies, and after all the chronicle plays excepting one; *Titus Andronicus* and *Romeo and Juliet*, tragedies, were written before most of all the plays in all the groups; *Henry VIII*, a chronicle play, was written last of all. At least this is as near as the dates can be ascertained. Yet for most of the plays the statement stands true, that their author began with comedies, turned next to serious history, then to tragedy, and last of all, in the romances, wrote chiefly to please himself. In spite of what we have said concerning the variety of moods a man's mind may have in a short period of time, we should expect this distribution of the plays, because it is the most likely thing that a man should earliest be interested in the lighter aspects of life; then, particularly in the England of that time, next be attracted and held by the dominant interest of the time, Eng-

land's history, — the man would have become patriot chiefly; next we should expect that absorption in history should bring about the accentuation of its great characters, at home and abroad, together with a search for typical characters and broadly general affairs of mankind, and a brooding over the great tragic aspects of the life of man; and, lastly, we should expect the man, when ripe in wisdom, to reap from these both real and apparent tragic phases of human existence, a setting forth of his philosophy of man's destiny in more resigned if not more genial terms than ever before. This is precisely what we do find to have been the course of the mind of Shakespeare, if we take the above order of the plays to be correct.

(*A very brief estimate of each of the plays of Shakespeare begins on the next page, and may be used for reference as the student takes up the plays themselves.*)

A poet is a more sensitive man than most of his fellows. He sees more, therefore. He is also better equipped with the power of expression of his experience. In wide, far, and deep seeing, and in power of fine adaptation of thing seen to power of reader or auditor to grasp, Shakespeare, excels all other men who have written.

His "Poems." — The "Poems" of Shakespeare are, in the order of their publication, *Venus and Adonis* (1593), *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599), *The Phœnix and the Turtle* (1601), the *Sonnets*, and *A Lover's Complaint* (1609). The Sonnets seem to have been under composition all the way from 1592 to 1609. Some of the poems in *The Passionate Pilgrim* are not by Shakespeare. While *all* of the poems under the titles given above are noteworthy for various reasons, the chief reason being that they contain one of the leading ideas which is carried throughout the dramas, namely, that man fails

because of the too strong dominance of some one quality in his make-up, yet it is only the Sonnets that are widely and popularly read. Vast quantities of ink have been used in futile attempts to clear up the mystery connected both with certain persons in the Sonnets and with the meaning of the Sonnets as a whole. Mystery has generally degenerated into mystification in these attempts, and little has been gained. It ought to be evident that Shakespeare reveals in these personal poems which we call *Sonnets* that he was guilty of jealousy in relation to another poet, that he had two most intimate friends, one of whom was a very attractive young man and the other of whom was none too good a woman, and that of his alliance with the woman he became thoroughly ashamed. Professor George H. Palmer in a little volume upon the *Sonnets* makes the claim that their author saw his passions to be matters of a moment only, and so became aware of an imperial Self which could not calmly be subjected to such momentary influences, and hence that the author passed on to the conception of spiritual immortality.

BRIEF CRITICAL SUGGESTIONS UPON EACH OF THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

Comedies. — We have said that the people of the days of Shakespearean drama did not care for realism on their stage, if realism is to be understood in the sense of photographic reproduction of life. The first of the comedies, *Love's Labour's Lost*, illustrates the author's successful avoidance of this kind of realism. He does this by means of a sub-plot, a plot subordinate to the main action of the play. This sub-plot, takes a "fantastical" Spaniard (a favorite stage character of the day), a curate, a schoolmaster, a constable, and a clown as its chief characters, and purposely forces itself into prominence at almost every point at which the main plot would become very life-like

in minute detail. The play is most interesting to study from this point of view. The songs in the play, particularly those "maintained," as the fantastic Spaniard says, by the owl and the cuckoo, are very lovely. In the very last words of this play, Shakespeare, in a reference to Marlowe, reveals his own modesty.

The *Two Gentlemen of Verona* is a much more "realistic" drama than *Love's Labour's Lost*, and a better play, if not such good poetry. As early as in this play the author begins to show himself troubled over the problem which fills his pages more and more; the problem, namely, that the haunting, harassing preoccupying of the mind by some one thought — of fear or of desire — is the source of nearly all the great difficulties and tragedies which beset the life of men, and that it is the treachery which this preoccupation practices upon the mind and life of a man, by absorbing all his energies, which is the immediate occasion of these difficulties. Yet it is evident that this play is by a youthful writer, because the thinking about this problem is not well-sustained. The author is often simply practicing the art of writing; as, for instance, in the song in Act IV, in which there is an obvious attempt to imitate music rather than to express emotion.

The Comedy of Errors is an excellently constructed stage play, in imitation of the *Menæchmi* of the Latin dramatist, Plautus. But it is decidedly a "stage play," full of tricks and conventional devices for amusement's sake, rather than chiefly a thing of thought. It is, however, a masterpiece in dramatic skill.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a thing of beauty and a joy forever. It is packed with poetry from first scene to last. It is filled with descriptions that are unexcelled; they convey to us the images desired, and yet such images as no other means of description could convey. No other man has ever seen life

about him so fully, so deeply, and so clearly as has the author of this fantasy. The great art of the poem is that into a fantasy its author succeeds in putting, almost in full, the English mind. The material for this play was taken from current coin everywhere, but was reissued stamped with the ineffaceable image and superscription of the world's greatest poet. Shakespeare's chief problem — that man makes the mistakes he does make in this world because his mind is so filled with some one thing as to interfere with the working of all other influences within him — is in even this play, and yet the author throws the responsibility not upon the man himself, but upon a fate without the man, in this instance a fate not unkind.

The Merchant of Venice is a tragedy, if the proud Jew is its hero, all the more tragic because the Jew is willing to be disgraced rather than face death; but it is the tradition to consider it a comedy. Shylock is a great brain, undoubtedly, quite capable of seeing through the trickery of even Portia. In this play Shakespeare is as much interested in the heart as in the mind. The gentle characters, such as Antonio, triumph in the end, or have triumph thrust into their hands by the kindly fate who is their author and the author of the play. The play is interesting for its plot construction There are four stories within it: the story of the caskets, that of the pound of flesh, Jessica's story, and the story of the rings. The four stories mingle, in comic and tragic lights and shadows, meeting in the middle of the play, and giving relief and strength to the movement of the play and the flow of emotions of the audience. This is one of the best of the Shakespearean dramas to study from the point of view of its structure.

In *The Taming of the Shrew* there is much cleverness and some delightful familiarity with rural scenes, though it is a rather

poor "story." The theme of the reducing of a shrewish woman to submitting to marriage is an old one, and has been employed many times, too, since the sixteenth century. The upshot is somewhat melancholy; and what part and lot Shakespeare had in the play must have been ironic, — still it makes very good acting. The play is of mixed authorship, and is based upon at least two earlier comedies by other authors, one of them an Italian.

The Merry Wives of Windsor, whenever written, was published in 1602, after the publication of the two parts of *Henry IV* and of *Henry V*. There are at least four sources for the plot, but the character of Falstaff is Shakespeare's creation carried over from his three plays just mentioned. If the action of *The Merry Wives* seems exaggerated, it is only because all dramatic action is quickened if not even much heightened beyond that of actual happenings. At the turn of the century Shakespeare was writing very rapidly; and there were, no doubt, times when he gave himself, perhaps from sheer weariness, to little more than pleasing the Tudor public. *The Merry Wives* would do that better than anything else. In this play, city-bred Englishmen would enjoy seeing their country cousins in the most absurd of situations and, as Englishmen would like the next moment, in situations over which self-contained men and women held complete control.

In *As You Like It* the playwright presents the world in miniature. The broad and generous, yet at times indifferent, courses of nature, and the shifting circumstances of man are passed through and thought upon. Jacques, the chief thinker in the play, has not suffered so much that his view of life is distorted. He has suffered enough to understand the sorrows of others; and he is large enough in mind to view human life in its complex relations, and not from the self-centered viewpoint

of the individual. But he is more direct in his observation and comment than his imitator, John Keats, whose sonnet entitled *The Human Seasons* may be compared with Jacques's observations upon the seven ages of man. The charm of Shakespeare's women is at its height in the Rosalind of this play. None takes us with winsomeness more than she.

Much Ado About Nothing is really about something of great importance, namely, the effect of " what the neighbors say the neighbors say." While what they say they say may be of no consequence in itself, yet its effect is portentous. This the wise Shakespeare makes plain; and while we are learning the lesson we have much of high entertainment.

No play of Shakespeare's is better known than *Twelfth Night.* It may not be read so much as the first part of *Henry IV*, as Dr. Johnson has said, but it is played more frequently. It is considered by many to be the best of the comedies. The beauty of the character of Viola, and the immensely amusing self-deception of Malvolio, the liveliness of the movement of the scenes, and the captivating poetry of numberless passages have become inalienable possessions of all theater lovers.

That " The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together," is what this man of vision puts into *All's Well that Ends Well.* Man in drama walks through life as does the horse with blinders on; he sees in only one direction. In tragedy the outcome of this partial blindness is destruction. In comedy the blindness is over-ruled by the dramatist causing some power outside the troubled character to intervene and set all affairs right. This occurs in the case of the man and the woman chiefly involved in the incidents of this play.

Measure for Measure is thought to have had some historical foundation. The greed and passions of men and the generosity and clean fineness of upright living are historical, surely, —

and we have them here; in so far there is no doubt that the play had many a historical antecedent. This play in its action follows a formula with which modern readers of drama are now familiar in the works of Ibsen, — from calm through storm to calm, — opening with a surface appearance of profound peace, but with crises in life almost immediately forcing themselves upward through this thin crust of superficial quiet and revealing a seething volcano beneath, and then settling down to peace once more. The opening lines of the fourth act are sung by a boy, and the words are the nearest to pure music of any in our language.

Chronicle plays. — Shakespeare never wrote a poorer play than the chronicle play which goes under the name of *The First Part of King Henry the Sixth.* Indeed, it was by no means all written by him, or, if it was, it must have been during his nodding hours. It interests the reader to see that in it one of the characters is Joan La Pucelle, commonly known as Joan of Arc. The treatment of her is unhandsome, and unworthy. There are great names in the play, but the bearers of those names rarely do great things, though they occasionally speak excellent poetry.

Two or three or more hands had a share in the production of both the *Second Part* and the *Third Part of Henry VI*, but they were famous hands, probably those of Peele, Greene, Marlowe, and Shakespeare. The result is what might be expected: too many cooks spoil the broth. Still there are lofty passages. There would have to be if the hand of Shakespeare went far in either creating or revising them. In *The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth* we are in the midst of the famous Wars of the Roses, in which the houses of York and Lancaster contended for supremacy in the kingdom. The three parts of *Henry VI* form a trilogy, with these wars as the background for certain strong characters to live and act upon. Richard Plantagenet, Duke

of York, is the strong man of the *Second Part*, and the White Rose wins under his leadership.

In *The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth*, Edward, the son of Richard Plantagenet, is placed upon the throne during the life of Henry, by Warwick, the king-maker, — "Proud setter up and puller down of kings," Queen Margaret calls him. Warwick is also celebrated in *The Last of the Barons* by the nineteenth-century novelist, Bulwer Lytton. But the one character in the play who begins to rivet our attention with a sense of impending horrors is the evil and sinister genius, murderous even thus early, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III. The superb but tender soliloquy of Henry VI in the fifth scene of Act II has the last word to say upon kingship, —

> O God! methinks it were a happy life,
> To be no better than a homely swain.

If this were a history of English politics, we should take up *The Tragedy of King Richard the Third* immediately after the three parts of *Henry VI*, for but two kings, Edward IV and Edward V, intervened between Henry VI and Richard III. But since we are trying as nearly as possible to follow the plays of Shakespeare in the probable order of their writing, the play now to characterize in a few words is *The Life and Death of King John*. The English chronicle plays did not undertake to dramatize episodes from the national point of view, but attempted to dramatize the annals of the nation's history, and hence took the chief occurrences in some one reign. Sometimes, as in the case of Henry VI and of Henry IV, it took more than one play to cover the one reign. This play of *King John* covers the reign of the man who assumed a "borrow'd majesty" when the rightful king, Richard Cœur de Lion, was away at the wars of the Crusades. It was during the reign of this John that

the nobles wrested Magna Charta from the crown, at Runnymede, in 1215; but Shakespeare is less interested in that fact than in the intellect strong enough to assume majesty and yet without the faculty for handling men. This is a great play. A few have even said it is among the very greatest. It is more neglected by readers than it should be, for there is within the play much of strong thought and of passionate emotion.

King Richard II is another play less read than it should be, even in comparison with others of the Shakespearean plays, doubtless because it is historical. Its theme is what Charles Lamb called "The reluctant pangs of abdicating royalty." "Woe to the land when the king is a child," Langland in *Piers Plowman* had quoted from *Ecclesiastes*. Richard II came to the throne when but ten years of age, and the woes of the land were up and well afoot by the time the action of the play begins. Richard is a lover of beauty, and, although he fights well for the retention of his crown, he is no match for the rough and shrewd politicians about him. There was much in the actual history of Richard's reign as highly romantic as anything in this play. The play has brief passages often quoted, favorite lines being among those spoken of the banished Norfolk, who

> toiled with works of war, retired himself
> To Italy; and there at Venice gave
> His body to that pleasant country's earth,
> And his pure soul unto his captain Christ,
> Under whose colors he had fought so long.

Chaucer lived and wrought during the reign of Richard II, and it is surprising that Shakespeare does not use him somehow in this play.

King Richard III is one of the best known of the plays. It has the distinction of being the only one of the chronicle plays that successfully holds the popular stage to-day. It is not mor-

bid curiosity that keeps people still interested in Richard. It is not his misshapen body nor his hideous features nor his murderous deeds that attract the theatergoer. It is the fact that we re-learn from the play that, however towering an intellect man may have, the thoughts and the imaginations of his heart may be evil continually. Aristotle, in his treatise on *Poetics*, says that the emotions which men feel in the presence of tragedy are pity and terror. No one can see the play of *Richard III* without the overwhelming feeling of terror at the recognition of what intellect may do when wedded to an evil heart. Shakespeare here shows his dramatic instinct at a high degree of power. He is able almost perfectly to take upon himself the conditions of other minds and other times and speak what they would speak. The poetry of intense emotion and of high intellect is here; and the dramatic movement is swift and powerful. Shakespeare is one who is able to gain all this by methods of his own. The genius can, by the sheer force of his own power, override the injunctions of the theorist and accomplish his purposes by any means he may choose to adopt. For example, it is a definite rule of the theorist about the drama that it will never do to permit the character in the play to reveal by its own words the circumstances that surround its acts and the personal motives that lead to those acts. We are taught that these things must be revealed in indirect ways. But Shakespeare pays no attention to such requirements, and when Richard, Duke of Gloucester, comes limping down the stage and says precisely what we are told he should not say, we are carried out of ourselves and surrender at once to the spell of the play:

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of York;
> And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house

In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths;
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments;
Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.
Grim-visaged war has smooth'd his wrinkled front;
And now, instead of mounting barbed steeds
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.
But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;
I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;
I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them:
Why I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
And descant on mine own deformity;
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover
To entertain these fair, well-spoken days,
I am determined to prove a villain
And hate the idle pleasure of these days.
Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,
By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams,
To set my brother Clarence and the king
In deadly hate the one against the other:
And if King Edward be as true and just
As I am subtle, false, and treacherous,
This day should Clarence closely be mew'd up
About a prophecy, which says that G
Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be.
Dive, thoughts, down to my soul: here Clarence comes.

Brother, good day: what means this armed guard
That waits upon your grace?

Dr. Samuel Johnson said that " None of Shakespeare's plays is more read than the *First and Second Parts of Henry the Fourth.*" This is still true, because of the fact that from the moment we read " Enter the Prince of Wales and Falstaff," the writer keeps us fascinated with that scandalous old man, " that old white-bearded Satan," Jack Falstaff himself, — " plump Jack." It is often mistakenly said that the creator of " this ton of a man " loved him. If he did, he did not hesitate to handle him untenderly, without gloves. He did laugh with and at him; but he doubtless would have objected to the name "Swine Centaur," given to Falstaff by Victor Hugo, the Shakespeare of France. Few men have ever been wittier or the cause of more wit in other men than Sir John Falstaff.

Victor Hugo says that it is the genius of the first order who creates human types. In the two parts of *King Henry IV*, the genius we call Shakespeare has created several human types. Among them, aside from the wicked old knight, are the " mad-cap " Prince of Wales, whom Shakespeare seems to us to have loved too much; the impetuous Percy, " the Hotspur of the North "; Glendower, the well-bred, sentimental man of feelings and dreams, brought up on the legends of the country of the Welsh; and " that same starved Justice," Robert Shallow, the man who couldn't lose his senses because he didn't have any. It may seem paradoxical that some of these strange characters, particularly Sir John Falstaff, should be so attractive to us; but that they are is evidence that their creator knew what human nature, perversely or not, takes delight in.

These two plays are filled with lines that are daily in the mouths of many of us, such as

". . . tell truth, and shame the devil."
"Give the devil his due."
"The lion will not touch the true prince."
"More than a little is by much too much."
"Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?"
"Thou seest I have more flesh than another man; and therefore more frailty."
"The nice hazard of one doubtful hour."
"O, this boy lends mettle to us all."
"Past and to come seems best; things present, worst."
"The wish was father to that thought."
"The power and puissance of the king."

Many others there are, — Falstaff's strictures on the value of "honour" in war, and King Henry's apostrophe to sleep, ending with the statement that

Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,

are among the most famous; and we may add the King's delicately lovely reference to

. . . . . those holy fields
Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet,
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd
For our advantage on the bitter cross.

There is not a great deal of great poetry in these two plays. Yet there is much, for their author could not write long without the poetic largeness of his mind revealing itself in copious measure.

"Homer, Job, Æschylus, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Lucretius, Juvenal, St. John, St. Paul, Tacitus, Dante, Rabelais, Cervantes, Shakespeare, — that is the avenue of the immovable giants of the human mind," said Victor Hugo. If one were to begin his acquaintance with Shakespeare through the reading of *King Henry V*, he would wonder why such high praise could be

rendered to its author. Although Shakespeare may have been on the eve of writing *Twelfth Night*, *Julius Cæsar*, and *Hamlet*, when *Henry V* was coming from his pen, yet for some reason he was willing to give himself in the last-named to the writing of what is little more than a chronicle, rather than even a chronicle *play*. Even though the battle of Agincourt, famous in history, occurs during the action of this play, yet the content of the play is largely filled with petty quarrels among soldiers. Fluellen, the Welshman, is a better and a truer man than Glendower, the Welshman in *Henry IV*, and so is worthy of notice. Henry V's wooing of Katherine of France is interesting; it is even most charming, to some readers. The only way in which one is likely to consider this play of value is to think of it as a part of the series of the chronicle plays. Taken thus, it is a good filler-in between *Henry IV* and *Henry VI*.

Tragedies. — If Shakespeare wrote any part of *Titus Andronicus*, it was a small part. This is one of the horror stories that detract from the beauty of the pages of literature. Shakespeare may have adapted it to the stage at the urgency of some theater manager, or because he was in need of money and took it as a hack job. The details of structure and device show a close intimacy with the theater, such as Shakespeare, the actor, must have had; and the play was very popular in the day of its reputed author.

The works of Shakespeare are sometimes spoken of as " Poems and Plays." The " Plays " are the dramas we are now in the midst of characterizing in this rapid fashion. The "Poems" have been briefly discussed. The play of *Romeo and Juliet* was published in 1597, and was probably written before 1596. It seems to have come from the author's pen while he was in the mood of the " poems," for its theme is the same as theirs, viz. youthful love in most passionate form. That reason alone would

not be sufficient for thinking it written at about the same time as the "poems," but we also find that the theme is handled with the same tense lyricism as they are, that its diction is rich and ornate as is theirs, that it has many rhymed couplets and double rhymes, that it contains sonnets and employs some of the stanzaic forms of the poems. The English feeling for landscape is strong in this play, as in many others. Like Petrarch before him, and like the romantic poets of the early nineteenth century, also, Shakespeare makes his characters to observe that their private pangs become Nature's own feeling, as when Romeo must leave Juliet and says

> Envious streaks
> Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east.

But it is youthful love crossed by ancestral hate that chiefly attracts the attention in this beautiful poem-play.

In *Julius Cæsar* the author made a play which has delighted the hearts of young and old in all generations since its writing. It has delighted them, even though it is tragic; for its fine opportunity for impressive stage scenes, its noble character sketching, its grand speeches, and its brisk action are welcomed wherever men read or go to the playhouse. As is often pointed out, the hero of the play is not Cæsar, but Brutus; but a play with the title of "Marcus Brutus" would not so well appeal to many, — not to a first-night audience, at least.

Readers and theatergoers differ widely as to which of the plays of Shakespeare is greatest. Each one of the tragedies, with the exception of *Titus Andronicus* and *Timon of Athens*, has its advocates. But probably there are more who favor one of these four, — *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *King Lear*, — though as great a man as Tolstoi found the reading of *King Lear* to be a bore. *Hamlet* is a thought play rather than a

play of action. In truth, the drama is that Hamlet himself fails to act even under so much reason for action. Yet no play begins with more of tense and desperate excitement than *Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark*, or, as it might be called, "Hamlet, the Doubter." Many stage versions drop the first 126 lines and begin with the second entrance of the Ghost and Horatio's fearfully excited

> I'll cross it though it blast me. Stay, illusion!
> If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
> Speak to me.

Could there be anything more dramatic than the appearance of that tongue-tied witness to a deed of horror which its son and namesake is to be called upon to avenge? There is no better illustration of the ancient Greek and Shakespearean method of opening a play with the action right in the heart of a tremendous crisis. All action has its rise, progress, culmination, and solution, and yet in the greatest of plays these parts are all within a tense and catastrophic crisis itself, and little or no time is spent in the exposition of antecedent circumstances. The so-called " exposition " of the play in *Hamlet* is in the second scene of the third act; not in the opening scenes of the first act, as so many theorists about the technique of the drama think it always should be. And this lack of exposition, or mere hinting at it, or postponing of it until later than the beginning of the play is almost the rule in Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Ibsen, the three greatest of the world's dramatists. Beginning within the crisis in the lives of characters or even at the catastrophe of their lives, is the rule with them. Horatio in this play is a much-loved character, — and is an indispensable foil to Hamlet. We never forget the other characters in *Hamlet*, but these two are so dominant that we admire no other. One of the best

studies of this play is to be found in Lowell's essay entitled *Shakespeare Once More.* For the interest it stimulates, that essay should be read by every student of *Hamlet.*

"Humanity reading is humanity knowing." The play of *Othello* is not now often produced upon the stage, but only two or three others of Shakespeare's plays are more often read in the easy-chair. Every one, therefore, knows the gentle Desdemona, the arch-fiend Iago, and the noble Moor of Venice. This play was written to show how a man's mind may be thrown out of balance by the passion of jealousy, and all good thereby be reversed to evil, — a tragedy, again, that occurs because the mind of man is subject to being overruled by one of its qualities. And if one is ever hesitant about what the really dramatic is, he may learn by turning to the speech of Othello, the Moor, just before the stabbing of himself in the last scene of the drama, and visualizing the action while he reads the speech. Nothing more crisply dramatic was ever staged than that; it is perfect "dramatic" speech and action. It gives the short, sharp shock which the journalist is always seeking to give, and which the great dramatist frequently succeeds in giving.

King Lear is, if not the greatest of the plays, at least the one in which the worst of tragedies is enacted, the tragedy of filial ingratitude; though it must be added that the foolish father brings the tragedy upon himself by failure to understand the nature of his daughters, and by over-fondness for the expression of reverence and affection for himself. And yet tragedy of fearful sort was certain to come upon all these persons because of the unnatural qualities of two of the daughters. Shakespeare appears, in the description of Goneril, to suggest that there are forces within the life of the universe that are beyond the scope of any truly natural explanation. If this play

is not at the apex of all his plays, it is because the action is exaggerated beyond our power to grasp its naturalness. But there is much, indeed, that is true to the hitherto unplumbed depths of human nature, and a great deal of it is expressed here in the most superbly majestic poetry. Perhaps no cry except that from the cross has echoed farther and deeper in the human heart than that of old dying Lear over dead Cordelia, —

> Thou'lt come no more,
> Never, never, never, never, never.

The story of Macbeth, the man with an over-vaulting ambition, yet one against whom so much appears to conspire, — the forces of fate, of evil men and women, of the elements of nature, of political conditions that only seem to favor, — this story is known by every reader of English literature. Few, if any, dramas are better constructed than this one, and it is, therefore, an admirable one to be studied by those who are interested in the architecture of a play. *Macbeth* excellently illustrates the possibility of keeping tense the interest of an audience even after the highest possible point of interest seems to have been reached, for the reënacting of the scenes of horror in the mind of sleep-walking Lady Macbeth are far more poignant and terrifying than the enacting of them in the earlier part of the play.

Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the relative rank of *Antony and Cleopatra*, it is almost universally recognized that in this play the teeming richness, the overflowing abundance of Shakespeare's mind, is shown at its height. Psychological analysis never again went farther than here; and the beauty of hundreds of lines is a perfect beauty. While one feels that here are the power and the grandeur, the subtlety and the passion of Egypt and of Rome, yet he feels, too, that here

is human life not in the little, as is so often said of a book, but in the large. The author of this play has caught the underlying motives and the moving forces in the life of the race for all time, and has, in lines of marvelous force and beauty, forever fixed them here for all men to ponder and to profit from. We may have little admiration for few, perhaps for none, of the characters in the play, but the picturing of them, and the revealing of their humanness in what they say fascinate and grip us in every scene. Many have thought that there is no more beautiful scene than that in which the death of Cleopatra occurs. The play is not easily read; but he who masters it will have acquired vigor of mind for the most difficult tasks that the interpretation of literature may present to him.

Livy, the Latin, and Plutarch, the Greek, had written accounts of Coriolanus, a great Roman of the early years of the fifth century B.C.; and Alexandre Hardy, the Frenchman, placed a play concerning him upon the stage in 1607. But it remained for Shakespeare to make the man to be the Titan he is. The tragedy in the life of Coriolanus lies in the struggle, within an inflexible mind, between the aristocratic sentiment of the man in matters of public concern and the sense of obligation in matters of domestic life. The play of *Coriolanus* is Shakespeare's successful attempt to picture a great man, sturdy, robust, uncovetous, intensely manly, thoroughly conscious of his personal superiority, yet without a shred of the sense of humor, and without the humanizing touch of sympathy with the inferior man in society. Coriolanus refuses to obey human instincts lest they place him upon a level with the members of the lower castes in human society. Yet he is chivalrous, and we constantly regret the unpliant nature of the intellect which will lead to the sacrifice of all that he loved to the stubborn pride of political rank. And there are other attractive characters: the

faithful Menenius, the gracious, gentle Virgilia, the high-spirited Valeria, the lofty-souled, but keen and pliant Volumnia. These are ever-living characters in the pages of dramatic literature.

Many have considered *Timon of Athens* as the record of a highly pessimistic mood of the author. But it is equally as sensible to consider it a dramatic interpretation of a mood which the author saw to be in the life of some other men. One wishes Shakespeare had had as little part in the making of this play as in the making of *Titus Andronicus;* but the evidence is strong that he had a large share in it. Timon is a man of noble and generous mind, who finds other men base, and, turning from them in bitter anger, pours out upon their baseness the most virulent contempt that tongue can utter. Yet the gloomy bitterness of the spirit of the play is redeemed by much great poetry.

Romances. — *Troilus and Cressida* is based upon the legends of Troy, and is concerned with a woman's unfaithfulness, and with soldierly deeds. Many of its readers dislike the play most heartily. Had it been finished by its author, the grandeur of a few of the scenes might have been discernible in all. The great names of the siege of Troy appear among the active personages, — Ajax, Achilles, Hector, and others. Chaucer had, in the fourteenth century, treated the story of Troilus and Cressida, but no doubt Shakespeare was more indebted to Chapman's translation of the *Iliad* of Homer. Though the play is in large part a mere dialogue scenario, yet Shakespeare succeeds in making the characters appear contemporary with us, even if their date is from 1193 B.C. to 1184 B.C. Had Hamlet been a playwriter, perhaps *Troilus and Cressida* would have been the sort of play he would have written.

Pericles, Prince of Tyre, though it has been successfully staged, is not a popular reading play. If there is an exception to the statement we have made that Shakespeare wrote the

Romances primarily to please himself, rather than the public or the stage manager, that exception would be *Pericles*. Few lines of it are such as men will cherish in their memories, and there seems not to have been much more than merely mechanical work done upon the story by the author of *The Tempest* and of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Still the fact that the play is full of that which is unpleasant is not evidence that the man with the most seeing eyes of his race may not have given much care and thought to the play.

Cymbeline, along with *King Lear*, is a "British" play. Its time is that of the Roman invasion. Shakespeare cares nothing for anachronisms in this play, as he cares nothing for them elsewhere. Hence we have, in the time of the Roman invasion of Britain, men called "Frenchmen" and others called "Dutchmen." But the author's purpose is to write something dramatic, and all is grist that comes into his hopper. In the main the chronicle or historical plays of Shakespeare are good history; but *King Lear* and *Cymbeline* are both mythical. *Cymbeline* would be well worth while if there were nothing good in it but the still popular song

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With everything that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise.

But when to song is added the thought of the following verses, we feel that there is much, indeed, that will make the play endure:

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
  Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
  Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.
Golden lads and girls all must,
  As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
  Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat;
  To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic must
  All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash
  Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
  Thou hast finish'd joy and moan;
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee!
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
Ghost unlaid forbear thee!
Nothing ill come near thee!
Quiet consummation have;
And renownèd be thy grave!

That human destiny is controlled by laws which guide the universe, and not by the capricious will of man, is a common theme of Shakespeare, and in *The Winter's Tale* the theme is very straightforwardly illustrated. This play is very much lacking in "modern technique," but it has been, nevertheless, a famous success again and again upon the modern stage. There is a great deal of picturesqueness about many of its scenes, which picturesqueness to a large degree accounts for its popularity. The story, too, is full of what the newspaper man calls "human interest." It was written late in the career of its author, 1610.

Shakespeare, it would seem, wrote no plays after *The Tempest*, (though he had some share after this in the writing of *King Henry VIII*, or *All is True*), hence his final energy seems to have been fully exerted in *The Tempest*. Much has been made of the symbolical allegory, of which some men find more or less in all inventive literature. We should prefer to call *The Tempest* in many respects an analogue, rather than an allegory, of life. The lines which life follows are not here followed, but their direction is paralleled and their tendencies made clear by this heightened picture of the action of men, which we call the drama of *The Tempest*. Drama, after all, does not give a picture of life, but a vision of it. This play is one of the best of illustrations of the fact that the requirements of critics according to the "principles" of modern technique do not always apply to Shakespeare. If, for example, we had the so-called "exposition" at the opening of this play, so that we should have in our possession all that was necessary to understand all the action which is to follow, as the technicians claim we should have, then there would be in the play no place for Stephano, for Trinculo, for Caliban, or for Ariel, with all the delight that accompanies the exhibition of these characters. Two, at least, of the most original creations in literature, Caliban and the dainty Ariel, would be missing from our memories; and we could ill spare them, especially the songs of Ariel.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What was the Renaissance? When did it begin in England?
2. Who were the Oxford Reformers, and what did they want to do?
3. For what should Tyndale be remembered?
4. What does *Tottel's Miscellany* suggest to you? Give its date.
5. Tell all you can of Sir Philip Sidney and of Sir Walter Raleigh.
6. For what is Francis Bacon famous?
7. What is "Euphuism"?

8. Name three of Edmund Spenser's works, and briefly characterize two of the three.

9. Quote a brief passage from Spenser's chief work.

10. Name in their time order the forms of drama which, in England, preceded the Shakespearean play.

11. Name the "first English Comedy"; the "first English Tragedy."

12. Who were Shakespeare's "immediate predecessors"? The most important one among them?

13. State the known facts of Shakespeare's life.

14. Characterize his theater.

15. (*a*) How many plays did Shakespeare probably have a hand in writing? (*b*) Name the groups into which they may be classified. Give these names in their general time order.

16. Briefly characterize two of Shakespeare's comedies and three of his tragedies.

17. Name five persons in each of three plays of Shakespeare, and give a concise statement of the chief traits of each.

18. Quote Shakespeare's Sonnet XXX; also a song from one of his plays.

19. What two types of literature besides the drama were quite prominent during the period of the Renaissance?

READING LIST FOR THE PERIOD OF THE RENAISSANCE

MORE,	*Utopia* (originally printed in Latin). Translated into English by Ralph Robinson.
SIDNEY,	*The Defence of Poesy*. Edited by A. S. Cook.
BACON,	*Essays*. Edited by W. Aldis Wright.
SPENSER,	*The Faerie Queen*. Globe Edition.
MARLOWE,	*Tamburlaine*. Edited by Havelock Ellis.
SHAKESPEARE,	*Macbeth*, *Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, *Julius Cæsar*, *King Henry IV*, *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The Academy Series.

HELPFUL BOOKS ON THE PERIOD

A History of Elizabethan Literature, George Saintsbury. (The Macmillan Company.)

English Writers, Vol. XI, Henry Morley. (Cassell & Co.)

The Italian Renaissance in England, Lewis Einstein. (The Macmillan Company.)

Elizabethan Literature, J. M. Robertson. (Williams & Norgate.)

English Literature during the Lifetime of Shakespeare, F. E. Schelling. (Henry Holt & Co.)

History of English Literature, Vol. III, Bernhard Ten Brink. (George Bell & Sons.)

Shakespeare's Life and Work, Sidney Lee. (The Macmillan Company.)

Shakespearean Tragedy, A. C. Bradley. (The Macmillan Company.)

The Highway of Letters, Chapters iv to xiii inclusive, Thomas Archer. (Cassell & Co., Limited.)

See also Bibliography on The Drama, in Chapter IX, pages 365 and 366.

CHAPTER IV

THE LITERATURE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

1613–1700

The Puritan Movement. — During the sixteenth century there had arisen in England a group of Protestants who soon came to be called Puritans because they demanded a "purer" worship than that of the Roman Catholic Church. By "purer" they meant "simpler," but to simplify meant, to them, to abandon all the ceremonies in use in the Catholic worship. The best and most intelligent among these Puritans desired "purity" to extend to *all* the doings of daily life, as well as to the worship of the church, and they soon came to enroll among their numbers many men eminent in the affairs of state as well as of church. These eminent men desired to control the state according to principles that were "pure" and single-minded. They had a great share in the overthrow of the Stuart kings during the seventeenth century, and, under Cromwell, they came into full control of the nation's political affairs. This was a quarter of a century after a certain part of the Puritans, called Separatists, had sent some of their members to the shores of America as *Pilgrims*. The whole literature of the seventeenth century mirrors the struggles between men of the Puritan type who desired to lead the "simple life," and those who preferred the more irregular life which, the student of history knows, the Stuart kings after James I desired themselves and their friends and followers to lead. John Milton, who said that he wished to

live as if ever in the great Taskmaster's eye, represented the Puritans better than any other writer. The most refined of those who represented the authors opposed to the program of the Puritans were the writers whom in this chapter we shall call the "Caroline lyrists." And John Dryden might well be said to stand between Milton and the opponents of the Puritans, for he at times represented Puritan ideas and at other times ideas much more pleasing to the life of the Court.

I. To Milton

Groups of seventeenth-century writers. — While Shakespeare and some of his contemporaries among dramatic writers of the Elizabethan days survived and worked for over a decade into the seventeenth century, yet they so evidently belong to an age different from that of the Puritan movement in church and state, in the days of that movement's strength, that we do not consider this century of Puritanism in Literature as beginning until the time when Shakespeare ceased to write, 1613.

The dramatists who continued to write after Shakespeare's death we call the "successors of Shakespeare." Character writers followed them; also the lyric poets of the days of the Charleses; religious writers, and philosophers were numerous; but above all of these stood John Milton and John Dryden, who were, along with Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare, among the greatest of English men of letters.

Shakespeare's successors. — The leading successors of Shakespeare were Thomas Middleton, John Webster, Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher, Ben Jonson, John Ford, and "modest and manly" Philip Massinger. Some of them had helped Shakespeare in the writing of some of his thirty-seven plays. Beaumont and Fletcher between them wrote at least fifty-two

plays; but it is not quantity that is significant in literature. Ben Jonson is the greatest among these successors of the great tragic master, though a few of the plays of some of the others are worthy of special note. Among these are *The Witch* and *Women beware Women*, by Middleton; *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*, by Webster; *The Faithful Shepherdess*, by Fletcher, and *Broken Heart*, by Ford.

The chief difficulty with all of these men, including Ben Jonson, was that they were too highly self-conscious. They were not absorbed in the subject matter of their work, not lost in their attention to the breathless process of the action of their plays or of the development of the characters under their gaze, or in the vivid reality of the dialogue of those characters. They were too intent upon showing themselves, upon making an impression that they, the authors, were of consequence. They were too intent upon " making a hit " with the public by " theatrical successes." All of this kept them from writing sincerely *from* themselves. They wrote extravagantly, therefore. They became " decadent," in the sense that their work showed undue interest in style and in a kind of subject matter that was no longer important.

Ben Jonson wrote many delightful Masques and three splendid comedies. The comedies were named *Volpone the Fox*, *The Silent Woman*, and *The Alchemist*. Later he wrote the gentle pastoral drama entitled *The Sad Shepherd*. His *Catiline* and *Bartholomew Fair* were popular in their day, and had something to do with his appointment as Poet Laureate. Other plays of his are worth mentioning, if for no other reason than that their very titles indicated the trend of the drama. *Every Man in His Humor* and *Every Man out of His Humor* and *Cynthia's Revels* suggest that dramatists were becoming interested, not so much in characters as in what those char-

acters, because of their temperaments, might chance to do. Yet, as out of the decay of other things something new arises, so out of this decadent interest in and close attention to typical temperaments and their manners, rather than to vital characters, there arose a type of writing quite distinctive in English literature, though it had had vogue in the late days of the literature of ancient Greece; namely, character writing.

Character writing. — The "character" was not what we to-day call a "character sketch." It was a distinct type of literature, just as the epic and the sonnet are distinct in themselves from other types. The character was a brief expository description of a type of human being, not of an individual. It was an attempt to show the qualities of a class of people by saying in brief, epigrammatic form how a representative of the class shows himself. The chief character writers were Sir Thomas Overbury, Joseph Hall, and John Earle, the last-named being the best of them. One example from John Earle will illustrate what these writers succeeded in doing:

A CHILD

Is a man in a small letter, yet the best copy of Adam before he tasted of Eve or of the apple; and he is happy whose small practice in the world can only write his character. He is nature's fresh picture newly drawn in oil, which time, and much handling, dims and defaces. His soul is yet a white paper unscribbled with observations of the world, wherewith, at length, it becomes a blurred notebook. He is purely happy, because he knows no evil, nor hath made means by sin to be acquainted with misery. He arrives not at the mischief of being wise, nor endures evils to come, by foreseeing them. He kisses and loves all, and, when the smart of the rod is past, smiles on his beater. Nature and his parents alike dandle him, and 'tice him on with a bait of sugar to a draught of wormwood. He plays yet, like a young prentice the first day, and is not come to his task of melancholy. All the language he speaks yet is tears; and they serve him well enough to express his necessity. His hardest labor is his tongue, as if he were loath

to use so deceitful an organ; and he is best company with it when he can but prattle. We laugh at his foolish sports, but his game is our earnest; and his drums, rattles, and hobby-horses, but the emblems and mocking of man's business. His father hath writ him as his own little story, wherein he reads those days of his life that he cannot remember, and sighs to see what innocence he hath out-lived. The elder he grows, he is a stair lower from God; and, like his first father, much worse in his breeches. He is the Christian's example, and the old man's relapse; the one imitates his pureness, and the other falls into his simplicity. Could he put off his body with his little coat, he had got eternity without a burden, and exchanged but one heaven for another.

Caroline lyrists. — The lyric poets of the time of Charles I and Charles II are called Caroline poets. The chief of them were Robert Herrick, Richard Crashaw, Henry Vaughan, Francis Quarles, and George Herbert. Their poems were mainly of love and of religion. Herrick's *Corinna* and Herbert's series of poems under the general title of *The Temple* are the best known from this group. In our day there has been a considerable revival of interest in both Herrick and Herbert, as there has been in the satirist, Dr. John Donne, who was a trifle older than they. Much of their poetry is very quaint, much of it dainty and lovely, but not a great deal is highly passionate. They looked upon both their love and their religion reflectively rather than with passionate emotion. Because of this, some of them have been called metaphysical poets. Their "metaphysics" consisted of curious and far-fetched comparisons and contrasts, however, rather than of very profound thinking.

These lines are representative of Herbert, —

> Sweet day! so cool, so calm, so bright, —
> The bridal of the earth and sky;
> The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
> For thou must die.

Religious writers. — No theological writer of the period equaled the beauty and stateliness of the thought and style of the author of *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, a book written as a defense of the Anglican Church against the Puritans. That author was Richard Hooker, who died in 1600 and hence belonged to the period of the Renaissance. John Ruskin has claimed that his own wonderful style owes its qualities to the King James Version of the Bible, which was printed in 1611, and to the writings of Hooker. But Jeremy Taylor, the author of *Holy Living and Dying*, which was published about the time of the execution of Charles I, 1649, has had a much larger number of readers than Hooker. His work is very thoughtful, but is also very eloquent, abounding in passages of the very best description in the language. The *Holy Living and Dying* became a household treasure in the homes of England, though perhaps not quite so much so as Richard Baxter's *Saint's Everlasting Rest.* Hooker, Taylor, and Baxter may well be called both theological and philosophical, as may Sir Thomas Browne, whose *Religio Medici* has been read the world over, and as may Robert Burton, whose *Anatomy of Melancholy* has been somewhat less popular, and Thomas Fuller, whose *Worthies of England* still attracts the general reader.

But the first really great name following that of Shakespeare is that of John Milton.

II. John Milton

Singer and seer. — Milton was brought up in a singing age, but none in his day was so great a *singer* as he. He was chiefly a singer in his youth. His time was not a time of great thinkers, yet the world has rarely seen so independent and so open-minded a *thinker* as he was in his middle years. Soon after the middle years of his life, the great singer and

JOHN MILTON

thinker became combined in him and the great *poet* Milton was the result.

Milton was born in London in the year 1608. His family were Puritans. He was educated at Cambridge University, and shortly afterwards went to the village of Horton, west of London, to live with his father during the latter's declining days. Here his singing period was spent. In 1638 Milton went to Italy. While there he met the astronomer Galileo. Returning to England, he began the period of his fighting for free institutions: freedom of worship, freedom of the press, and freedom in the election of kings and magistrates, — his age of thinking. In the midst of all this struggling for liberty, Milton became totally blind. Then, after 1669, came the period in his life during which two great epics and one great drama issued from his pen, the period of the truly great poet who was both singer and thinker.

We shall not mention all of the works of Milton, but only those which a modern student must know. During his singing days, Milton wrote, among other poems, *L' Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Comus*, and *Lycidas*. During his days as militant thinker, he wrote the *Tractate* (or Tract) *on Education*, and *Areopagitica*. During the days when the philosopher and the singer in verse were welded into the great poet, he wrote *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*.

The Minor Poems. — *L' Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Lycidas*, and *Comus* have by tradition come to be called Milton's "Minor Poems." But many a poet who has achieved immortality by works of lesser merit might well have longed for such productions as the minor poems of Milton to be reckoned as his major works.

L' Allegro and *Il Penseroso* are companion poems, the one giving the attitude to life of the man of lightsome spirit, the other that of the man of pensively melancholy spirit. They

are almost identical in structure and must, then, have been written in a highly self-conscious mood. A careful study of the structure of these poems will be certain to alter the opinion of the man who believes that it is only "fine frenzy" which can make poetry, and that the poet pays no attention to plan and carefully wrought workmanship. One who will analyze these as structural compositions will forever possess the wholesome knowledge that in good poetry there is organic form, just as in excellent prose there may be beauties of diction and phrase.

Each of these poems is reflective. Few lines in literature are more highly prized by the man of academic bent of mind than the following from *Il Penseroso*, —

> But let my due feet never fail
> To walk the studious cloister's pale,
> And love the high embowèd roof,
> With antique pillars massy-proof,
> And storied windows richly dight,
> Casting a dim religious light . . .

These two companion poems are famous for many and often-quoted phrases, both of imagery and of thought. Nothing more unaffected can be said of them than was said by Walter Savage Landor: "Whenever I come to the end of these poems, or either of them, it is always with a sigh of regret."

Lycidas is an elegy upon the death of Edmund King, a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge. It has been said that nothing higher in English poesy has been attained than the levels reached in this poem. It certainly is magically beautiful. Yet to call it an elegy upon the death of some one man is rather misleading. A truer description of the poem would be that it is a tremendous denunciation of the repulsively evil practices which had crept into the established

ecclesiastical system of that time in England. A "scramble at the shearer's feast" is as apt a picture of the activity of numerous members of that system as it would be of the activity in the modern stock exchange. *Lycidas* is a poem of high distinction, and not the least of its distinguished services to men consists in its being the forerunner of the *Thyrsis* of Matthew Arnold and the *Adonais* of Shelley. Both these nineteenth-century poems should be read along with *Lycidas*, as should also the *Threnody* of Emerson, the American poet.

Comus is the best of all masques. Some critics have claimed superiority for a few of Ben Jonson's masques in so far as picturesqueness is concerned, but no one considers any other masque equal to the *Comus* in poetic qualities. The theme of temptation was strongly working in Milton's mind as early as the time of the writing of this poem. It was worked out in elaborate fashion in both the grand epics of his later days. Milton was a Puritan in thought, though technically what was then called an "Independent" in the politics of the day. Here, in *Comus*, frivolous men of the second quarter of the seventeenth century were taught the value of the victory of temperance over excess, — the rich beauty of a life in which the spirit of true purity victoriously meets the temptations of the bodily life.

Milton's prose. — We have said that the theme of temptation was coming to the forefront in Milton's thought when he wrote *Comus*. The good of the state as an ideal was also becoming uppermost at this time. It is the good of the state for which he strenuously fought in several prose works. Some of the prose works treated (1) of ecclesiastical liberty, others (2) of freedom of opinion in all matters, and still others (3) of certain civil affairs that were of more importance in his day than they now are. Some of the pamphlets written in relation to those

civil affairs spread his fame over the entire continent of Europe. Yet it is only the pamphlets in the second group that are of permanent value, and that can, therefore, be termed literary. Among these the more consequential were the *Tractate on Education*, and the *Areopagitica: a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*. Each of these is filled with the passion of a great controversialist.

The *Tract on Education* aided nobly in relieving education from the burden of teaching by abstraction rather than by concrete illustration, and from the bondage of routine. The *Areopagitica* is the best of refutations of the often-repeated statement that Milton had no humor, for in it there are not infrequent gleams of that saving grace. In this pamphlet there are also loyal praise of the majesty of the great city of London and an intense devotion to the destiny of England. Greater in importance than these things, however, is the eloquent and closely reasoned claim and plea made for the right and justice of freedom of thought and of utterance. The *Areopagitica*, like the Minor Poems, is filled with what are now "familiar quotations." One among them is, "As good almost kill a man as kill a good book." These prose works placed Milton with Raleigh, Hooker, Browne, Bacon, and Dryden as the masters of modern English prose before the eighteenth century.

Milton's great epics. — It is quite probable that no other man has known the "Authorized" or King James Version of the Bible so well as Milton knew it, and while thirty years of general reading provided most of the materials gathered for *Paradise Lost*, yet that Bible was the truer and deeper inspiration of this vast, magnificent, and altogether wonderful poem. Puritanism, in all the broad senses of the term, was, more than all else, responsible for the chief ideas of the poem, but the renaissance movement was responsible for most of the imagery,

for the classical form, and even for many of the ideas. As the poet Keats later showed, the Satan of *Paradise Lost* is rather the Titan of Greek mythology than the evil spirit of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Milton intended in this poem, as he said, to "justify the ways of God to man." It is often thought, because of this statement, that he meant to argue men into certain theological beliefs. But, though he was a great controversialist in his prose writings, and though the Calvinistic theology intrudes itself into his Paradise and Heaven and gives surpassing sublimity to the thought of the poem, yet his chief intention was, by imagery, by describing, and by telling of story, to lead men to see that certain truths concerning man, God, and destiny can neither be controverted nor evaded. In fact he so disliked dogmatic speculation that he satirizes the devils as entertaining themselves with such speculation when they

> reasoned high
> Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
> Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
> And found no end in wandering mazes lost.

Such is the radiant beauty of many hundreds of lines of *Paradise Lost* that one hesitates to quote any as examples, lest the reader think one has overlooked other passages of more resplendent sublimity. Perhaps the passage in which Satan is represented as struggling through the welter of chaos is as brilliant as any. In it occur the lines in which Satan is said to see

> Far off th' empyreal Heaven, extended wide
> In circuit, undetermin'd square or round,
> With opal towers and battlements adorn'd
> Of living sapphire, once his native seat;

> And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
> This pendent world, in bigness as a star
> Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.

" This pendent world," however, is a part of the whole starry universe, and Satan has to go to the center of the glittering galaxy before he arrives at the Earth.

The description of Satan, too, — he who is not less than archangel ruined, — is unsurpassed, —

> shone
> Above them all th' arch-angel; but his face
> Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
> Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
> Of dauntless courage and considerate pride
> Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, . . .

No more space can be given to quotation here; but the entire passage in Book I will repay all study that one can give it.

The theme of *Paradise Lost* is the Temptation and Fall of man; and the theme of *Paradise Regained* is the Temptation and Victory of man through Christ. *Paradise Lost* had been published in 1667. *Paradise Regained* was published in 1670. Milton had handed to a young Quaker friend, Thomas Ellwood. the manuscript of the first of these two poems. After reading it, Ellwood returned the manuscript with the comment and query, " Thou hast said much here of Paradise lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise found? " A year later Milton put into the hands of his friend the manuscript of the second of the poems, saying " This is owing to you."

Paradise Regained is a gentle poem, strongly contrasting in spirit and style with its great and older companion. Milton had had in mind the idea of the older poem before he left the halls of Cambridge university. The grandeur of the conception and the fervor of its thought had been long brooded upon,

and its author purposely spared no rich adornment in presenting it. But his purpose in the later epic was, with severe simplicity, to impress the lesson that Paradise is to be achieved by man only through the bearing of temptation in the patient spirit of Christ, biding the time and will of the Father. Milton seemed to have thought that any stirring animation of feeling and any decorative wording would draw attention away from the directness of this lesson, and hence in *Paradise Regained* we have " probably the most unadorned poem extant in any language." As an artistic *structure* it is relatively perfect, but rarely does the reader find in it either the majesty or the rich and free adornment of the other epic. The vision of all " the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them " in the third and fourth books lifts us to the level of the poesy of *Paradise Lost*, but only an occasional line elsewhere succeeds in doing so.

Samson Agonistes. — *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* are grand epics. *Samson Agonistes* is a tragic drama. It is, however, a drama built upon the architectural lines of ancient Greek craftsmanship, and not upon modern lines, the division into acts being marked by the speeches of the Chorus instead of by the formal inter-act of modern times. In this drama Milton follows closely the story of Samson as told in the Book of Judges, adding only one important feature, namely, the part taken by Harapha, the giant, who represents brute secular force. This drama is Greek in form; it has all the fervid force of the language and thought of the Hebrew prophets; it has the faith of the Christian justified in the outcome of the struggle; and it has, also, the intimacy of an autobiographical revelation. It is autobiographical in the bitterness with which Milton views the breaking down of his ideals in the outworking of the destinies of the English nation, and it even rises to the deeply pathetic cry of vivid, personal mis-

fortune. Milton had been blind for some time before he wrote this poem, which was published in 1670 at the same time as the *Paradise Regained*, and the lament of Samson over his blindness was Milton's own agonized lament over his own blindness:

> Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
> Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
> Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,
> And all her various objects of delight
> Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
> Inferior to the vilest now become
> Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me,
> They creep, yet see; I dark in light, expos'd
> To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
> Within doors, or without, still as a fool
> In power of others, never in my own;
> Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
> O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
> Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
> Without all hope of day!

And yet obedience, patience, and hope are the three great virtues which the whole life-long endurance and work of Milton have taught the world. Opinion is divided to-day between *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* as the greatest of Milton's productions, though tradition leans heavily in favor of the former. His works as a whole present man with the two great contrasting influences. On the one hand, Sin and Death sweep through the universe, blasting all worlds in their onward career, and finally seize the earth as their doomed prey. On the other hand, trustful obedience triumphs over all the horror and suffering and agony of a world which is not, as a whole, devoted to the service of its creator and judge.

A poet's opinion. — Milton's odes and sonnets, for which this

passing mention will have to suffice, are as carefully wrought and as earnest in their purposes as the greater works. He was eminently scholarly; even while in the midst of his poetic labors, he took time to prepare a Latin Lexicon. He would have enjoyed Tennyson's *Ode to Milton*, not alone for the lofty beauty of its thought, but also for the stateliness of its classic measure. These are its first few lines, —

O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time and Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages;
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,
Tower, as the deep-domed empyrëan
Rings to the roar of an angel onset —

III. John Dryden

Good-sense. — John Dryden was the great "good-sense" man of the seventeenth century. His good sense showed itself in his workmanship, in the subject matter which he employed, — and, unfortunately, it ran, as many think, somewhat to selfishness in his everyday life.

The key to his workmanship lies in verses of his own, which run thus, —

Gently make haste, of labor not afraid,
A hundred times consider what you've said;
Polish, re-polish, every color lay,
And sometimes add, but oftener take away.

No better advice could be given to the beginner in the craft of writing. This care in the handling of the details of his work was due considerably to an influence that came into England from the outside. Italy had affected Chaucer not a little,

had affected the Elizabethans much more, and the lyrists of the days of Charles I still more. But with Charles II, Italian influence went out forever, and French influence established itself solidly for a generation.

French influence. — In France there had been going on an effort to establish a fixed language, a standard French, which it was hoped might express a literature that, because it would be in a standardized language, would become permanent. In 1635 there had been founded the French Academy, an institution which still exists, the purpose of which was to set up and maintain a standard in intellectual matters by which literary expression should be measured. The French were asking in that day, as they still ask in this, not alone whether one is entertained, or pleased, or touched by a work of art or thought, but also whether one is right, or correct, in being so affected by it. The courtiers exiled by Cromwell from England went to France. With nothing to do but to cultivate taste and sensitive refinement, a great deal of dilettantism arose among them, though underneath it all there lay a sense of the need of mental discipline and culture. By 1660, when Charles II came to the throne of England, the French critic and poet, Boileau, had already begun to wipe out the last shreds of Italian influence in France. Constantly he insisted: "Let us turn from the paste brilliants of Italy. All should tend to good sense." In 1671 this critic published an imitation of the *Art of Poetry* of Horace, the Latin poet and critic. Boileau said to those who would write that they should go to nature, but while going they should observe how the great master in art had in his work followed nature, and then they should do as he had done; that if they would walk in the path of the great dead and ceaselessly try to do as they had done, they would come to a worthy goal. To Boileau, the

greater artists were the best poets of the Augustan time in Latin literature. Under this sort of theory the French became, as would be expected, masters of a prose style; but the theory was too restrictive of individual freedom to permit of expansive thought, of warmth of passion, or of personal expressiveness of temperament such as the content and form of great poetry require for its making.

Dryden was born in 1631, and was twenty-nine years of age when the Restoration period opened in English history, with all its French taste and critical judgment. He had not reached a highly productive age when the influence of Boileau was at its height. These influences affected him greatly. In the dedication of his drama entitled *The Rival Ladies*, he said, "Imagination in a poet is a faculty so wild and lawless that, like an high-ranging spaniel, it must have clogs tied to it, lest it outrun the judgment." Elsewhere he also said that "the story is the least part of the poem, though it be the foundation of it; the price lies wholly in the workmanship, the forming with more care than a lapidary sets a jewel." (By "story" he meant the subject developed within the poem, whether narrative or anything else.) And yet while all the French insistence upon craftsmanship affected him strongly, such was the energy of his genius that he transcended the trammels of these imitative practices to the degree that he became, as Prof. George Saintsbury says, "perhaps the most English of all English writers." His good sense led him to see that poetry was in need of reform, for in the writings of the so-called "metaphysical" poets, of whom Dr. John Donne was chief, both thought and form had turned to such fantastic conceits that he who runs could not possibly read them with understanding. Yet such was the honesty of the man that he remained true to his native environment in thought and

feeling, and did not become altogether a weak imitator; and such was the force of his genius that he was able to employ a conscious manner of writing, and yet through that manner put forth a series of lyrics, dramas, translations, and criticisms that were marked by a powerful originality of point of view and of development of thought.

The subject matter of his writings was, in the main, "the common-sense of what men were and are." And through it all, he did what Falstaff urged ancient Pistol to do, — "Talk like a man of this world." Although at our distance of time from him much that he wrote seems very remote from our interests, and although a good deal of it was extravagant even for his day, yet it clung and still clings close to what men can understand, and it moved, as it still moves, their admiration or their intense dislike, because in it there can be seen the image of human nature as it is.

With all of his native force and originality, Dryden was so much the child of his time that his religion and his politics changed with the veering of the prevailing wind of doctrine and with the varying success of party. He was republican in the days of Cromwell, and royalist with the Restoration of royalty to power. He was Presbyterian in the days when that ecclesiastical group was a great power in the State, and Roman Catholic when Charles II and James II were in control. Still, these changes were not so illogical as his detractors love to pretend; for, as to politics, the Presbyterian faction was always more in sympathy with the royalists than were the "Independents," and, being a man of the people, Dryden "went with the majority," which is precisely what most men do, whether they be great or small, despite the unpopularity of the phrase. Furthermore, in the matter of both politics and religion, there was no "opening," as we say to-day, for a liter-

ary man, no support and no encouragement, except upon the royalist and Roman Catholic side, and Dryden, being primarily a man of letters, went where he could "get work," where he could find a reading public and live by its patronage.

Periods of his works. — Dryden passed through various phases, or periods, in his literary work. He began, with poetry which was lyric and "occasional," that is to say, written for the celebration of specific times and events. A large share of this poetry is rubbish to us.

Next, Dryden turned to play writing. The theaters had been closed at the beginning of the Civil War between Charles I and the Cromwellians, at which time ended the greatest period in the history of drama. At the Restoration, the theaters were opened again by Charles II, and a new dramatic school arose. Now, in his second period, to meet the public demand, Dryden for fourteen years gave himself to writing for the theater. Only three of his plays were particularly successful: *The Indian Emperor*, *All for Love*, and *The Spanish Friar*. *All for Love* has the same subject matter as *Antony and Cleopatra*, and is the only one of his dramas which, Dryden said, he wrote to please himself.

During the third period of his work there came from his pen a series of poems which were satirical and didactic. The chief among them was a satire, the topmost in quality of all the satires in English verse. It is called *Absalom and Achitophel*. English verse is full of powerful passages of terrific satire, most of it political, much of it too lengthy to be effective in modern times, and a great deal of it downright brutal. Of many British satirists Coleridge's lines may well be employed, —

> Swans sing before they die: 'twere no bad thing
> Did certain persons die before they sing.

But Dryden's fierce and powerful political satire is eminently worth the reading. He saw a close likeness between some of the politicians of that time and those of the reign of David, King of Israel, during the time of the rebellion of David's son, Absolom; and he was keen enough to see that a Scripture parallel would, most readily of all things, appeal to the people of his period, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic.

During this third phase of his work Dryden wrote also, in 1682, a poem entitled *Religio Laici*, which was practically a brief for the Church of England. Then in 1687 he wrote one entitled *The Hind and the Panther*, which was an argument between a milk-white Hind, intended to be thought typical of Catholicism, and a Panther, whose spots were meant to indicate the many heresies and divisions of Protestantism. *The Hind and the Panther* has been called by even a hostile Protestant "a model of melodious reasoning." As a matter of fact the two poems are not so inconsistent as they seem to one who observes superficially, for in the earlier poem, *Religio Laici*, Dryden had already urged the unity of faith and obedience to authority which is characteristic of the Roman Catholic Church, as the following lines will attest, —

> — after hearing what the Church can say,
> If still our reason runs another way,
> That private Reason 'tis more just to curb
> Than by disputes the public peace disturb.
> For points obscure are of small use to learn:
> But common quiet is mankind's concern.

In 1687, too, was published a *Song for St. Cecilia's Day*. Upon this poem Dryden's fame as a lyrical singer rests secure. It has been praised by the most exacting of critics, including that great militant thinker of Germany, Lessing. Together with *Alexander's Feast* (1697), it can be read with as much of ease and

pleasure to-day as if it had been written by one of the most popular of our contemporaries, — a statement which cannot be made of many of the products of the seventeenth century. It should be said also, that within the plays of Dryden are scattered some very exquisite lyrics.

His fourth period came during the last ten years of his life (he died in 1700). Now Dryden again turned occasionally to play writing; but none of the plays written at this time is very much worth the attention of the general reader. It was during this last, or fourth period, of his labors, that he wrote the famous *Fables* and the chief of his translations. The *Fables* also he called " translations." They were made from Ovid, Homer, Boccaccio, and Chaucer. It is better to call them paraphrases. The best of his real translations are: (1) those from the works of Juvenal, the Roman satirist, to whom Dryden was akin in spirit, and (2) the *Art of Painting* of Du Fresnoy, the Frenchman.

Criticism. — Most of the critical writing of Dryden was in the form of prefaces to his plays, and hence was spread over several of these four periods of his work. The best of his critical writings is what is known as the *Essay on Dramatic Poesy.* It is one of the ablest treatments of the subject which its title suggests, in any language.

Dryden's style. — It will now be seen that Dryden was a most prolific, untiring, and versatile genius. There are times when, as one traverses the pathways of his work, one is inclined, from being impressed with the variety and vastness of what he was accomplishing, to cry with Hamlet, " Rest, rest, perturb'd spirit." No greater gift was presented to the English-writing race by Dryden than the clearness, plainness, and homeliness of his prose sentences. His sentences are excellent, as compared with those of any other writer of either the

seventeenth or the eighteenth centuries, in spite of his tendency to elongate them "joint by joint as fresh thoughts recur" to him. This "jointing" is always a tendency upon the part of the writer who thinks while he writes.

About the only regret we can have in connection with Dryden is that he did not carry out the project of an Arthurian epic, which he as well as Milton and Spenser had contemplated.

In the great bulk of the prose literature of the world, it is a refreshment to turn to the sturdy prose pages of John Dryden, though he is not a pastime for the frivolous and indolent.

IV. Later Contemporaries of Milton and Dryden

Scientists. — It is not until one has come to the seventeenth century that he can speak of a literature of science in Great Britain. Bacon had proposed for science what we now call the inductive method, that is, the examination of actual details of fact and the drawing of conclusions from that examination and from it alone. In 1662 came the founding of the Royal Society of London; and one man's name became immortal at once, for he was the first to state the theory of gravitation as the formula covering the relation of the parts of the universe to each other, or, we may say, of the "system of the universe." That man was Sir Isaac Newton. Under the stimulus of the Royal Society many sciences came to be formally and systematically studied for the first time. Among these sciences were chemistry, mineralogy, zoölogy, botany, and medicine, and even astrology passed over into the science of astronomy. Newton had presented his *Theory of Light* to the Royal Society in 1671. In 1687, the *Principia*, which contained the statement of the theory of gravitation, inaugurated a revolution in human thought beside

which the English political Revolution of 1688 is insignificance itself.

Philosophers. — In political philosophy two writers were prominent during this century, — Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Thomas Hobbes published in 1651 a treatise under the heavy title of *Leviathan*, in which he maintained two things: first, that the origin of all power is in the people, and, second, that the legitimate purpose of all exercise of power is the common good of all the people. None could say after this that kings ruled by right conferred upon them by divine authority alone, though Hobbes denied the value of the modern doctrine of " recall," for he declared that power once delegated by the people to rulers could not be taken away even by the people who had delegated it.

John Locke, following in the footsteps of Bacon, published in 1690 a book entitled an *Essay on Human Understanding*. In this book Locke elaborated the idea that all real knowledge is derived from experience. He said that the human mind is, at the birth of the individual, like a clean sheet of white paper; that upon this sheet there come to be written, as it were, the experiences we have through sensation and our reflection upon sensation, and that the " human understanding " is composed of an infinite number of complex ideas which have grown from this reflection upon sensation. He failed, however, to tell anything of very great value about this power of reflection which we possess. In this same year, 1690, Locke published another book, this time upon *Civil Government*. This book, it will be seen, was published but two years after the Revolution which occurred under the leadership of William of Orange, while Hobbes's books had come out during the rule of Cromwell. Each book, then, was a *timely* one, and each justified the reigning practice of its day. Locke's was a decided advance upon that of Hobbes,

for it claimed that the people have the right to recall, or take from any ruler, the power they have given into his hands, and that the supreme authority is in the legislature.

Locke's style was rather dry, but clear and simple. He was the most enlightened man of the last half of his century, and, as Edmund Gosse suggests, his modesty and candor and kindliness of mental attitude towards others made him somewhat like Charles Darwin, the scientist of the nineteenth century.

Fiction writers. — Few books have been more widely and more lovingly read than *The Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan, published in part in 1678, the remainder in 1684. To one who thinks as he reads, no statement is more astounding than the often-made one that the author of *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* and *The Pilgrim's Progress* was an ignorant man. He was not a college-bred man, but the evidence that he was both a man of full mind and a consummate artist is in these two books.

Bunyan's books were intended to be an aid to religious life, and they succeeded eminently in this purpose. But Bunyan did one thing in the writing of *The Pilgrim's Progress* of which he was not conscious. He became, along with Madame de la Fayette in France and Samuel Richardson in England, one of the founders of the modern novel. Prose fiction writers in the seventeenth century, both in France and England, were not (1) looking into the hearts of men, either their own or those of others, and writing down what they saw there; nor (2) were they writing with the singleness of purpose and of effect which mark the master in speech-craft. But Madame de la Fayette, a Frenchwoman, did, without any hysteria either, precisely that first thing, namely, looked into the human heart, — which happened to be her own heart, — and then,

in *La Princess de Cleves* (1678), wrote strongly, sanely, and delicately an accurate description of what she saw there. She was the first of true psychologists in modern fiction. It was in that same year of 1678 that Part I of *The Pilgrim's Progress* was published. Bunyan was not the psychologist that Madame de la Fayette proved herself to be, but he was an instinctive artist. The strongest artistic instinct within him was that of *selection*. Selection implies rejection. And in art, which is the reproduction of life in enjoyable and easily understood forms, there is rejected all which does not, in the work of art, serve some one dominant purpose. Bunyan's book takes one man and makes him march one path to one goal. That is art. That gives what we may call unity to the work. Bunyan was the first man to do this in modern prose fiction. Whatever else he may be remembered for, he should not be forgotten for this. It was left for Samuel Richardson, during another and later period, to take up, in three books published between 1740 and 1753, the psychology of Madame de la Fayette and the artistic simplicity of John Bunyan and apply them, not to the individual alone, but to the human group, or society.

Diarists. — The Diary has not been a very successful form of literature. It is too artificial. It pretends to be written for the writer's eye alone, as a rule, while no sensible person will believe that it has not been intended for the world to read. The two best diaries in all literature were produced in England: that of John Evelyn during the first half of the seventeenth century, and that of Samuel Pepys during the last half.

Pepys's *Diary* is especially interesting to students of history and of drama. The reference to current events in the politics of the times and in the theatrical world are most charming, and illuminating, too. One always feels, while reading them, as if

he were being stirred both to amusement and to intellectual curiosity. One wants to know the man who wrote the book, and feels that he is looking at the very things that that man himself has seen. No student of history or of literature can afford to miss the delight of reading the *Diary* of Samuel Pepys. And one who does read it never forgets the description of the wife of William Penn, or the estimate of *Hamlet*, or the delicate social difficulties into which Pepys gets himself and out of which he so skillfully extricates himself. This diary is one of the most charming of all things in the whole history of literature.

An Essayist. — The best essay writer in the seventeenth century, with the exception of Bacon, was Sir William Temple. Temple wrote his *Essays* after the Revolution of 1688. They read to us more like those of a twentieth-century stylist than do even the skilled works of the masters of the century following Temple. One sentence from him is sufficient to illustrate:

"When all is done, human life is, at the greatest and the best, but like a froward child, that must be played with and humored a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over."

Minor poets. — The minor poetry of this century was very "minor." Two contemporaries of Milton and precursors of Dryden were Edmund Waller and Abraham Cowley. Waller revived and remodeled the heroic couplet which Chaucer had employed, and Dryden then gave this remodeled couplet the vogue it continued to have for a century and a half. Waller should be remembered as one whom Dryden considered his greatest teacher. Abraham Cowley was a good essayist, and, in his earlier years, a somewhat fantastic poet. Later he became well known for his odes, which were almost noble in both

emotion and expression and therefore almost, according to Ruskin, great poetry. Cowley's *Odes* had considerable influence upon the work of Dryden, as is shown in the latter's splendid *Alexander's Feast.*

The satires by Andrew Marvell, and especially those by Samuel Butler, during the period of the Revolution, were fiercely powerful; but they can hardly be called literature, except by a very elastic use of the term. The time spent upon the reading of the *Hudibras* of this Samuel Butler might better be spent upon the reading of *The Way of All Flesh*, a highly accurate picture in novel form of English life by the Samuel Butler of the mid-nineteenth century, and a book which a few consider one of the best in the whole realm of novel production. The two Samuel Butlers should be distinguished, and the second of them never forgotten.

Around "glorious John" Dryden in Will's Coffee-house in London there often gathered many minor poets who were clever anticipators of the modern journalistic verse writer. Among them were the Earls of Rochester and of Dorset. Rochester's epigram and quasi-epitaph on Charles II is famous for its mockery, —

> Here lies our sovereign lord the king,
> Whose word no man relies on:
> Who never said a foolish thing
> Nor ever did a wise one.

But the Earl of Dorset's introductory lines to some verses written during the Dutch War in 1665 find a surer chord of response in the breast of many a modern student, —

> To all ye ladies now on land
> We men *at sea* indite;
> But first would have you understand
> How hard it is to write.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell what you have learned about the Puritan movement.

2. Who were the leading "successors" of Shakespeare? Tell what you have learned about the works of one of them.

3. What was the purpose of the "character-writings" of the seventeenth century?

4. In Palgrave's "Golden Treasury" find a lyric of the seventeenth century and quote it from memory.

5. Classify the works of John Milton.

6. What effect had Milton's blindness upon his writings?

7. Memorize and quote the passage in *Paradise Lost* which you think the finest.

8. What is a "Masque"? What is the chief purpose of Milton's Masque of *Comus?*

9. Quote Dryden's lines on "how to write."

10. Briefly describe the phases through which the literary work of Dryden passed.

11. A German critic, Lessing, said that Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, an Ode in honor of St. Cecilia's Day, "is full of musical pictures, but gives no employment to the painter's brush." Read the ode and see if you agree with Lessing.

12. Classify the chief writers of the last years of the seventeenth century.

READING LIST FOR THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

BEN JONSON,	*The Alchemist.* Edited by Brinsley Nicholson.
JOHN EARLE,	*Microcosmographie.* Edited by Edward Arber.
ROBERT HERRICK,	*The Temple.* "Everyman's Library."
GEORGE HERBERT,	*Hesperides.* "Everyman's Library."
DRYDEN,	*A Song for St. Cecilia's Day, Alexander's Feast.* In *Poetical Works*, edited by W. D. Christie.
	Translation of *The Æneid.* In *Poetical Works*, Cambridge Edition.
MILTON,	*Minor Poems.* Edited by Mary A. Jordan.
	Paradise Lost. Edited by Israel Gollancz.
	Samson Agonistes. Edited by H. M. Percival.

HELPFUL BOOKS ON THE PERIOD

Seventeenth Century Studies, Edmund W. Gosse. (Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co.)

The Jacobean Poets, Edmund W. Gosse. (John Murray.)

History of English Poetry, Vol. III, W. J. Courthope. (The Macmillan Company.)

Ben Jonson to Dryden, in the series entitled Ward's "English Poets." (The Macmillan Company.)

History of English Literature, H. A. Taine. (Chatto & Windus.)

The Age of Dryden, Richard Garnett. (George Bell & Sons.)

John Milton, M. Pattison in "English Men of Letters" Series. (The Macmillan Company.)

John Bunyan, J. A. Froude, in "English Men of Letters" Series. (The Macmillan Company.)

Old English Dramatists, James Russell Lowell. (Houghton, Mifflin, & Co.)

Puritan and Anglican, Edward Dowden. (Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co.)

From Shakespeare to Pope, Edmund Gosse. (Dodd, Mead, & Co.)

CHAPTER V

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

1700–1798

I. Its General Character

English literature of the eighteenth century began with the publication, in 1701, of Defoe's *True-born Englishman*. This century is one often maligned. But it is maligned only by the uninformed and unthinking; for it was, despite all its trivialities, a century of high and hard thinking. The renaissance and the reformation periods had advanced Europe to a cultural point far beyond anything attained previously, except in some forms of the art production of the thirteenth century and in some aspects of the philosophical thinking of the third century preceding the Christian era. The seventeenth century had seen considerable settling down and back from the results achieved by the two movements, the Renaissance and the Reformation, which had ended the middle ages and introduced modern times. But the eighteenth century rose to be one of deep and absorbed reflection. All the elements of civilization and culture were passed under review by the thinkers of Great Britain and even more deeply by those of Germany and France. The intellect of man was pondered over as it had not been since the days of Aristotle in ancient Greece. And not only man's intellect, but the universe in which man lives, was thought through with a penetrative power of vision, especially by such minds as that of Kant in Germany, such as had never before been applied to the nature and purposes of the universe.

The foundations of government, and all the aspects of its constitution and administration, were examined most seriously. The keenest attempts were also made to estimate the processes of literary production and the values of that which had been done in literature and other forms of art in the past.

It was an intellectual century, primarily. And all the activities of mind we have just been outlining were certain to bear fruit in life. They did bear fruit in life, both in that disciplined expression of life which we call literary work and in the less disciplined form of life which we term social relationships. Yet this century, while it produced great literature, produced little which can be ranked with the greatest, for it was nearly all brought forth too much under the "rule of thumb" of the intellect. And, moreover, the social life of the century, while in general it was one of progress, yet was much hampered by the strong struggles of old institutions to perpetuate their already doomed existence.

The century was, in Europe, largely one of reflection upon the past. But that reflection was sure to extend itself to what was contemporary, and when it did so, it precipitated a crisis in the French Revolution. The eighteenth century may be said, then, to be a transitional century, — one fully taking up into itself the elements of the past and then transmuting them into the vitality of the future, — a century actively preparatory for that which was to follow. The greatest product of that century was the civilization of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

It was, on the whole, a conservative age; but the result of its conservatism was such an intelligent conservation of that which was of value in the past that it brought about at its end great revolutions, such as the French Revolution, against the harmful and valueless elements of life which had survived

and crystallized out of the past. It was an epoch so full of understanding of what man had experienced that it forced men into the desire and necessity for experience that was relatively new. So much of all this ferment of intellectual life as came to be put into books is what concerns us here.

Classification of writers. — The British authors of the eighteenth century may be grouped as poets, essayists, novelists, philosophers, and historians. We shall take them up for consideration in these groups.

The last years of the *seventeenth* century were the most barren of all times since the dreary stretches of the fifteenth. Hence it will be found easy to keep within the confines of the *eighteenth* century, in such consideration, so far as its beginning is concerned. But it is impossible to refrain from at least slight discussion of some of the poets of the nineteenth century when we have in hand those of the eighteenth, for several of the workers in the literature of the pre-Victorian or early decades of the nineteenth century were, in their work, well under way between 1790 and 1800.

I. The Poets

Division. — The poetry of the eighteenth century may be divided into three groups. In some instances the same authors will be mentioned in more than one group, for the principle of division upon which the grouping is here based, while seeming to be a time principle, is in reality one of the spirit of the poetry in the various divisions. The first group of poems was written between 1701 and 1738, beginning with Defoe's *True-born Englishman.* The chief poet was Pope. The second group was written between 1738 and 1785. Dr. Samuel Johnson's *London* marked the beginning of this group. The chief poet was Gray. The third group was written between

1785 and 1798. The first edition of the poems of Robert Burns opened this brief productive period. He was chief of the poets in this third period. A new literary century began in 1798 with the publication of a volume entitled *Lyrical Ballads*, written by Coleridge and Wordsworth, yet we include early labors of these two men within this third eighteenth-century group, for the sake of uniformity in dates.

The spirit of early eighteenth-century poetry. — The eighteenth century is misunderstood by so many to-day because they are content to take its legacies without examination. The common thought about that age is that it was one of extreme and severe formalism, meaning by "formalism" living and doing all thinking and work by rule; that it was an age interested in being "correct," even at the expense of vitality. It is true that "correctness" was the dominant characteristic of the early decades of that century; but it was not the only characteristic. Underneath and up through all that classic severity and formalism there struggled the spirit of freedom of thought and freedom of expression. The spirit of the whole century in literature may be described as one of constant struggle between, on the one hand, repression of original individual thought and feeling, and, on the other hand, free, personal expressiveness of individual thought and feeling and of instinct for form that would best reveal individuality. This struggle was one in which the second of the two forces gradually triumphed. The three groups of poetry which we have mentioned are separated from each other on precisely this basis. During the *first* period classic formalism and restraint were uppermost in strength, the work of Alexander Pope being the standard of the time, though there were notable symptoms of revolt. During the *second* period this control by the ancients and by their chief repre-

sentative, Pope, was rather thoroughly undermined. And during the *third* period it altogether ceased to control.

1. *The First Period of Eighteenth-century Poetry*, 1701–1738

Influences upon it. — The spirit of the years in poetry from 1701 to 1738 was, as we have said, one of formalism, or of living, thinking, and working by rule. The chief influences were: (1) Horace's *Ars Poetica*, (2) Boileau's *L'Art Poetique*, and (3) René Rapin's work translated from the French under the title of *Reflections* and containing a sort of code of rules for writers, founded upon the practices of the ancients and the theories of Aristotle, and (4) the teachings of the critical work of Dryden. Pope was the man immediately in control.

Despite the fact that we fret under the exacting demands of these formal masters, Alexander Pope is too much overlooked to-day in the study of literature. Edward Everett Hale, Jr., speaks rightly of Pope as the " much-neglected poet who said many things so much better than any one else could ever say them." Still it must be admitted that it is for the isolated " sayings " that he is not only most famous but most worthy to be known. But the isolated sayings are almost continuous! Each statement of his, in many of his poems, is in and of itself a notable one. This, of course, does not rank his poetry among the highest and finest, for a poem ought to be of such organic nature that the whole and the parts should be inseparable. And yet, however this may be, all poets suffer from the fact that their richest poetry is often in single lines (Pope's in double lines, or couplets) and brief passages. Especially is this true of those who are guilty of overproduction, as most poets are.

Alexander Pope was convinced that the imagination, that is, the picture making and the constructive power of the mind of man, must not work by its own laws, but must be controlled by reason and by rules drawn from the observation of the work of already successful writers. Sir Joshua Reynolds later in the century than Pope was to formulate the doctrine of his work when he came to say, "There is but one school, that of Nature; and of that the old masters hold the key." It should be noted that there is recognition of nature, but that the guiding power is placed in the hands of the old masters.

Alexander Pope. — The poems of Pope were produced in three groups. (1) The first consisted of the *Pastorals*, which appeared in 1709, the *Essay on Criticism*, in 1711, and *The Rape of the Lock*, 1712. The *Pastorals* were imitative of Virgil. They consisted of four eclogues on the seasons. The school of nature and the key held by the old masters were here together, surely. The *Essay on Criticism* consists of writing about writing; a good deal of it being even "writing about writing about writing," for it undertakes to tell how the critic, or one who judges writing, should regulate his behavior. He must be "candid, modest, open, well-bred," must be willing even to bear attack himself. *The Rape of the Lock* placed Pope in the first rank of European poets of his day. In all those things which it had been thought an English poet could not achieve, such as deftness of touch, elegance of style, exquisite satire, this deformed and sickly-bodied, but phenomenally brilliant Englishman, surpassed even the French and Italian and Spanish, who had thought such a thing impossible. At last, British men of letters had among themselves one who was superior to most of those whom they had thought they must imitate. Now their own home model, Alexander Pope, became supreme.

(2) The second group of Pope's works contained a second

pastoral entitled *The Messiah*, published in 1712, *Windsor Forest*, in 1713, translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, between 1715 and 1725, and the *Dunciad*, 1728. *The Messiah* was copied after Isaiah in substance and after Virgil in style. *Windsor Forest* was a jumble of everything, from description of eels to political philosophy. The translations of the epics of Homer are still highly praised and widely read, though to the discriminating reader who knows the Greek they are "no Homer." The *Dunciad* was a fine, yet savage, cruelly fierce, and unworthy satire upon the enemies of Pope, especially some of the minor poets of his day. Pope had his enemies, many and bitter, in spite of his immense vogue. No man of consequence is long without some enemies. To Pope, in this poem, some of his contemporaries are represented as the very embodiment of the Deity of Dulness; in their activity, he thought, every hour "ductile Dulness new meanders takes." His enemies succeeded in returning fire with effectiveness upon their satirist, and Pope, sensitive to a fault, was much embittered by it.

(3) The third group of his poems consisted of the *Essay on Man*, which was published in 1734, and the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, 1735. There were other poems in this period, as in the others, but those here named are more than merely representative of all that was important among his productions. The *Essay on Man* was thought for a long time, by the greatest of men both at home and abroad, to be "the noblest specimen of philosophical poetry which our language affords." But it is not a logical piece of work in its reasoning; and it is mechanically constructed, often for no apparent purpose except to secure a certain rhyme. The *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* is one of a series of so-called *Moral Essays*, or Epistles to men and women, some written to praise, some to blame, and is the most splendid of all his fascinating satires. It is matchless in its

lashings of those whom its author venomously hated. The title is not an attractive one to our generation, and therefore the poem is often overlooked by readers; a comment upon the value of an attractive title.

Pope still holds a commanding place among English poets. It is that of the finest artist in the handling of details, though not in sustained expression of either thought or emotion. Men often maintain that physical ill has much to do with genius. It certainly had much to do with the nature of the genius of Pope. The peculiarly bitter character of his satire was doubtless largely due to the ills to which his flesh was heir.

Minor poetry to 1738. — The remaining poetry of the first thirty-eight years of the century may be treated briefly. Defoe's *True-born Englishman* was a defense of William III, and an excellent introduction to the reign of Queen Anne. The poem was also a good introduction to the work of Defoe as a pamphleteer, which will be noticed in another connection.

Allan Ramsay, a Scotchman, was one of those who, as he said, " spoke their mother-tongue without disguise." He should be remembered not so much for the frequently noticed *Gentle Shepherd* as for the two groups of poems entitled *The Tea-Table* and *The Evergreen*, which stimulated a number of song writers to make ready the popular ear for the riper songs of Burns.

James Thomson, another Scotchman, in his *Seasons*, 1730, blazed distinctly the path which the nature worshipers of the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century were to tread.

> Ye forests bend, ye harvests wave, to Him;
> Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart,
> As home he goes beneath the joyous moon,

could have been written only by one who felt within himself the stirrings of deepest love of nature.

Joseph Addison, the journalist, was also a poet. His *Campaign*, 1704, celebrating the Battle of Blenheim, came most logically from him, as a journalist, for it was a sort of " Gazette " in rhyme. The dramatic work of Addison, and the dramatic work of the entire century, too, may be best treated apart from these three main periods of poetry upon which we are dwelling. But the second period should not be entered upon without notice of a poem by Bernard Mandeville, published in England in 1706, under the title *The Grumbling Hive*, or *The Knaves turned Honest*. This poem should not be overlooked by those who desire to follow the many lines which led to the great movement called the French Revolution, for it is a very distinct mark of the reaction very early setting in against the evils of an artificial life, and an emphasis upon the need of maintaining life in the innocence of a state of nature, — an emphasis deserving of mention as occurring long before Rousseau. The summary of it by Henry Morley cannot be improved upon:

Bees in a hive are like men in society; they have trades and professions as men have; and in a certain hive every bee became so painfully conscious of the knavery of all his neighbors, that all resolved to become honest. When they did so, there was no more need for lawyers, because there was no injustice to guard against; no need for doctors, because there was an end of ways of life and ways of eating that produced disease; no need of merchants, because there was no demand for foreign luxuries. Trades based upon waste and folly disappeared, and thus with honesty came poverty. The standing army was put down, because the honest hive was capable of no aggressive war. It was attacked, as defenseless, by the bees of other hives. Every bee then served as a volunteer. The enemies were driven back, but honesty had found its way at last to such simplicity of life that the hive itself was judged to be unnecessary. The whole swarm, therefore, flew back to its original home in a hollow tree.

2. *Second Period of Eighteenth-century Poetry*, 1738–1785

1738–1785. — The second period of eighteenth-century poetry, from 1738 to 1785, was like the first, with this difference, — that

it advanced beyond the prevalent tendency of the first period in a nearer approach to nature and, therefore, in less deference to the use of the key " held by the old masters."

In 1738 Samuel Johnson, destitute of this world's goods, shambling-gaited, near-sighted, a curiosity to look upon, but in all things of the mind and of the moral life fearlessly sincere, and at last in old age to be recognized as filled with the purest love and tenderness, — a man in all essentials of lofty grandeur, — published a poem entitled *London*, and in 1749 one entitled *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. *London* was an imitation of one of the satires of the Latin poet, Juvenal. It became popular at once, though it contained the only spark of insincerity which his whole life revealed, for it was written in the heroic couplets of Pope and it affected to scorn the city of London, which he was really beginning to love most passionately. *The Vanity of Human Wishes* is also an experiment in heroic couplets, and also in imitation of Juvenal; but it is graver, even to melancholy, than *London*. Its melancholy is most thoughtful, preluding the undue gravity which was to prevail throughout the entire period, and which amounted almost to hypochondria in Robert Blair's morbid *The Grave*. Then, when we read in Edward Young of

> The worm to riot in that rose so red,

we find a hand reaching out to Edgar Allan Poe, with his *Conqueror Worm*. The famous work of Edward Young was the *Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality*. Young and Blair were more sincere — they were entirely sincere — than Thomas Gray, however.

Thomas Gray. — Perhaps Thomas Gray was less sincere in expression than he was in his own uncommunicated thoughts; for, as Matthew Arnold said of him, " He never spoke out." There are few poems more often memorized than Gray's

Elegy in a Country Churchyard. Fortunately it is less tinged with the melancholy mental sickness of the time than were the poems of many of his contemporaries. It is less melancholy than his own ode *On a Distant Prospect of Eton College,* for in the *Elegy* the artistry of the man was at work more than was the pressure of the melancholy of his soul, which is so strong in the other poem. The *Elegy* is unsurpassed for its exquisite expression of so much that is distinctly English in reflective thought. Its author represented in this poem what was so appealing to his contemporary, Goldsmith, the awakening spirit of English democracy. It may be said of the *Elegy* that no other one poem is so fully characteristic of the entire eighteenth century. Thomas Gray should be read for his contributions to the literature of letter-writing, so well begun in English literature by Lady Rachel Russell in the later years of the preceding century, as well as for his polished verse.

Minor poetry to 1785. — William Collins in 1748 wrote an ode or elegy upon the death of James Thomson, beginning, " In yonder grave a Druid lies." No stronger tribute could have been paid to the essentially British nature of the sort of poetry which Thomson and his school were writing. Collins, a year earlier, in 1747, had published a volume of twelve Odes. Among these *The Passions* has been a favorite with declaimers. His *Ode to Evening* brings the poetry of the day close to the aërial music of Keats. No lines are more characteristic of him than these:

> How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
> By all their country's wishes blest!
> When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
> Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
> She there shall dress a sweeter sod
> Than fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there!

This is delicately melodious, gently stirring, and only faintly melancholy.

James Thomson did some of his work during this second period of the poetry of the century, though most of it during the first period. The second period saw the appearance of *The Castle of Indolence.* This poem Thomson wrote in the Spenserian or nine-lined stanza. Indolence he represents as a false enchanter who harbors lotus-eating captives in his embowered castle, but is finally conquered by a Knight of Arts and Industry. In its allegorical nature the poem might be one of the late nineteenth century. In its unemotional manner, too, it is rather out of its date, which is 1748. Many consider this poem much superior to the same author's *Seasons.*

Between the years 1760 and 1770, at which latter date he was only eighteen years of age, Thomas Chatterton wrote the most remarkable poems that have ever appeared in print from so young a poet. Ballads, semi-lyrical tragedies, heroic poems, interludes, all were written in mock-antique spelling, which the author found in Kersey's *Dictionary*, and not in the literature of the fifteenth century, as his contemporaries thought. These poems were full of rich but unrestrained melodies, such as we call romantic. Most of Chatterton's poems are known under the general title of the *Rowley Poems*, so-called because they purported to have been written by a mythical priest, named T. Rowley.

About the same time that Chatterton was writing, James

Macpherson (in 1762) published what was claimed by its author to be a series of translations of epic poems from the Gaelic, or ancient Caledonian tongue. These poems were filled with highly stimulating mysteries, and good melodies, too, for that age. Indeed, they affected the whole course of European literature from that time on. The French Chateaubriand, the English Byron and even Wordsworth, and the German Goethe would hardly have had the world ready for them but for the work of *Ossian*, as Macpherson called the writer whom he claimed to be translating. Primitive, plaintive, pathetic, melancholy, the epics were to those who lived in that age, though to us insincere, pompous, and pretentious. The acceptance of Ossian's work was due to two facts: first, that people then were wearying of the correctness of the classic literary form, and second, that they were hungering for something in ideas remote from their immediate experience, or from any easily imagined combination of their experiences. Macpherson gave that something to them, especially in his chief epic poem, *Fingal*.

Bishop Percy fell in with the work of Chatterton and of Ossian, and in 1765 published his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. The ballads and romances contained in Percy's *Reliques* were medieval rather than ancient. They had an immense influence in furthering the already aroused interest in things that were primeval as well as medieval. Their success illustrates the increasing interest in freedom of expression, in revolt from classic formalism. The tastes of the eighteenth century were broadly various, as we have already suggested. That this is true, one may see clearly if he will but read almost any passage from Pope and think of the enthusiasm it created, and then turn to Ossian, with knowledge of the equal enthusiasm aroused by him, and read from his prose-poetry any one of many such passages as

Cuchullin sits at Lego's lake, at the dark rolling of waters. Night is around the hero; and his thousands spread on the heath; a hundred oaks burn in the midst; the feast of shells is smoking wide. Carril strikes the harp, beneath a tree; his gray locks glitter in the beam; the rustling blast of night is near, and light his aged hair. This song is of the blue Togorma, and of its chief, Cuchullin's friend.

The Deserted Village of Oliver Goldsmith is still a popular poem. It was printed in 1770. Its author's interest was in the life of common man.

> But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
> When once destroyed, can never be supplied

strikes the keynote of much of the thought of this Irishman, and helped to open the way for a reawakening of interest in England's mainstay, her country folk. Goldsmith was neither very emotional nor very didactic; rather, he attempted calmly to describe only what he had seen. But he served to call attention strongly to the life of the fields.

James Beattie, also, in his *Minstrel* (1771) shows a notable love for the beauty of nature and for communion with her, thus carrying the literary expression of that time farther towards the romantic interest of later days. The love of the visible forms of nature was constantly widening and deepening as the century aged.

This second period upon which we are now dwelling came to an end with the *Task* of William Cowper, 1785. Cowper wrote many religious hymns such as those with which the Wesleyan movement had flooded the country earlier in the century. Cowper was gently humorous in *John Gilpin's Ride*, and mildly pathetic in his lines to his *Mother's Picture;* in these and in all else he was natural in feeling. He was also greatly interested in the classics of Greece and Rome, and translated some of

them into English. In this variety of work and interest he was a kind of epitome of the age. It is striking, indeed, how much an inseparable part of their epoch the men of the eighteenth century were; but equally striking that they, with their epoch were transitional in character, leaning much upon the past and yet definitely, as we now see, prophetic of the future. Cowper's lines

> Lovely indeed the mimic works of art,
> But Nature's works far lovelier

denote the pending change from artificiality to naturalness in the communication of thought and feeling in poetry. The *Task* was his most important work. Cowper loved English liberty, but he gloomily mourned over the conventionality, the injustice, the cruelty, which infected what he thought to be decaying society.

> My ear is pained,
> My soul is sick, with every day's report
> Of wrong and outrage with which earth is filled.
> There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart,
> It does not feel for man.

Cowper has been called the "father" of that naturalistic reaction in poetry which is called English romanticism, but, as is usually the case, the name romanticism is confused when it is applied to such faithful realistic description, not easy to parallel elsewhere, as we find in the following:

> The cattle mourn in corners, where the fence
> Screens them, and seem half petrified to sleep
> In unrecumbent sadness. There they wait
> Their wonted fodder; not like hungering man,
> Fretful if unsupplied; but silent, meek,
> And patient of the slow-paced swain's delay.
> He from the stack carves out the accustomed load,

Deep-plunging, and again deep plunging oft,
His broad, keen knife into the solid mass;
Smooth as a wall the upright remnant stands,
With such undeviating and even force
He severs it away.

Great as was the art of the authors of the first two periods of the poetry of the eighteenth century, yet they, including even Pope, had not the artistic feeling to put much of their work in any but an intellectual way.

3. *Third Period of Eighteenth-century Poetry*, 1785–1798

1785–1798. — The third poetic period of the eighteenth century ushered in the so-called era of Romanticism. Yet romanticism was not new. Every age has had romanticists within it. Shakespeare, almost two centuries earlier, was the greatest of all romanticists. But the closing years of the eighteenth century, together with the opening decades of the nineteenth, were so filled with important men who had that curious interest in the strange aspects of human experience which we call romanticism, that by common consent we give the name romantic to their age.

The word " romance " has traveled so far from its home in its meaning that it would not recognize its parents if it were to return to them. Rome, Roman, romance (or Rome-derived) languages, qualities of subject matter and of speech that belong to the middle and western Mediterranean lands, the people who used the languages derived and modified chiefly from the Latin of Rome (French, Spanish, Italian, — " Romance languages and literature "), interesting and quaint departures from reality, exaggerated grotesqueness, things remote or unusual in time or in place or in both, intimate and feelingful attitude towards external nature, spiritual as opposed to material, the personally

expressive, vivid interest in common things, insoluble mystery and strangeness, — along these many roads, and along still other roads, has the word traveled.

Hawthorne thought that the romantic artist was one who would not commit the unpardonable sin of swerving aside from the truth of the human heart, yet would "mingle the Marvelous" as a slight, delicate, and evanescent flavor "of the dish offered to the public." The use of "legendary mist" for "picturesque effect," he thought, would aid the romanticist in achieving his purpose. He said that "artfully and airily" to remove story and characters from the ordinary lines of life is romantic.

Legendary mist, or its equivalent in some fashion, *has* become the chief element of romance in the theory of most of those who have had to tell what romanticism is, and, most conveniently, the legends considered by the theorists have been taken in the main, — not from very ancient sources, because they would seem too far remote to permit the reader to accept them as if they were true, — but from medieval times. The middle ages are near enough not to seem unlifelike; and it has been the easiest thing to turn to them for vast quantities of material with which to secure the romantic effect of insoluble mystery or strangeness.

Yet in the long run the instinct of the public, even in matters of highly artistic importance is found to be correct. And the instinct of the public which fastens itself so readily upon the love story and considers it as the standard *type* of what is romantic, is about as nearly right as can be. Nothing is more wonderful or more strange, after all, than the impulse to love and all that is associated with it; and while by no means is it true that the love story covers the romantic field entirely, yet the love story is by all means more truly typical of what is

romantic than are events and situations in times remote or in places strange.

It is distinctly true, as Walter Pater has said, that in the overcharged atmosphere of the middle ages there are many unworked sources of romantic effect, of a strange beauty, — much that will satisfy our curiosity and our love of the beautiful, — hence the middle ages furnish ready-made the most usable material for illustration of romantic thought and feeling. But the same things exist in the twentieth century; only they are not so easy to isolate from their surroundings. Intensity of mood or strong interest in what has hitherto not been recognized, or not fully appreciated, is the spirit of romanticism, rather than interest in a far-away time or in an unfamiliar geographical location.

Nor is it a highly imaginative quality, in the sense of a lofty way of looking at things, that makes up the romantic atmosphere. Wordsworth is almost universally recognized as the "apostle" of the romantic movement in England, and yet he places the most conscious restraints upon imaginative flight in what he considers his best work, *The Excursion*. There is no exposition of romanticism that would not describe realism as well, if it should take as an illustration such lines as these from Wordsworth, —

> And I have traveled far as Hull to see
> What clothes he might have left or other property.

Interest in things hitherto not sufficiently recognized, and treatment of them in such a way as to suggest that in them there are insoluble mysteries and strange and beautiful and wonderful powers of arousing curiosity, *that* is romantic. Remoteness from the hitherto unexperienced rather than remoteness in time and place or in either of them gives the romantic atmosphere.

Definition of Romanticism. — Romance might be very simply defined as that which represents the mysterious, or at least the marvelous, in either real or fancied life.

Robert Burns. — Now, this third period of English verse in the eighteenth century, which was also the easily marked beginning of the "romantic movement," opened with the work of one who, not less than any man who ever lived, practiced the maxim that "there is but one school, that of Nature," though he did not look to masters old or new for a key. That man was Robert Burns. Burns neglected any care or thought of what others had done, and for his inspiration went directly to the *sources* of experience, of thought, and of feeling.

This song-intoxicated "Ayreshire ploughman" published his first volume of poems in 1786. Elemental feeling, instinct, not classic masters, not intellect even, dominated this man. Here is his doctrine of the matter that had troubled all his predecessors since Dryden:

> The Muse, nae poet ever fand her,
> Till by himsel' he learned to wander,
> Adown some trotting burn's meander,
> And no think lang;
> O sweet to stray, and pensive ponder
> A heart-felt sang.

John G. Lockhart's *Life of Burns* and Thomas Carlyle's *Essay on Burns* are among the most read of biographical works. This is true not only because they are so well written, but because the subject treated in them is one of the most interesting. Burns, like Shakespeare, came from the ranks of the poor, though Shakespeare was of the town and Burns of the country. Burns suffered many hardships from his early poverty, and sympathized strongly with all weak and downtrodden creatures. He turned aside his plow to save the mouse nest and the

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BIRTHPLACE OF ROBERT BURNS

daisy, brooded over the pathos of the one and the beauty of the other, and then sang of them in his poems. He was much influenced by the contemporary wave of democracy then sweeping over the political and social world. Perhaps no man has ever desired more strongly the realization of many a poet's dream of the identification of the democracy and the aristocracy, the coming of all people upon one level, and that level the highest. Neither leisure, nor dress, nor authority, nor title, nor wealth makes a man, in Burns's opinion, but good sense and native worth. A man's a man if endowed with sense and character, and to Burns the time is coming when

> man to man, the warld o'er,
> Shall brothers be for a' that.

Burns was born in 1759 and died in 1796; but into those few years were crowded many hard and sad experiences, and, at times, many pleasing ones both among the socially great and the lowly, for he was welcomed in cultured Edinburgh as well as in the plowman's cottage.

Few can read his passionately earnest songs against oppression and in praise of loyalty and humanity without being moved to recognition of the greatness of Burns. Passionate treatment of love is the chief interest of Burns, however, and to him an easy task, for his singing robes were ever on; and perhaps fullness of blood rather than of brain accounts for the buoyant force and spontaneity of nearly all that he penned. *The Jolly Beggars*, *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, *Tam o' Shanter*, *The Banks o' Doon*, *Afton Water*, *Highland Mary*, *To Mary in Heaven*, *Bannockburn*, *Comin' through the Rye*, *My Heart's in the Highlands*, and *For A' That and A' That*, and numbers of other poems by him are known wherever English-speaking people read.

William Blake. — The *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Ex-*

perience, written by William Blake, were Elizabethan in their music, but in subject matter they were very like that of the nineteenth-century writers who were interested in the animal world and in the cry of the children. Charles Lamb, a "belated Elizabethan," wrote of Blake, "His pictures, one in particular, The Canterbury Pilgrims (far above Stothard's), have great merit, but are hard, dry, and yet with grace. He has written a catalogue of them, with a most spirited criticism on Chaucer, but mystical and full of vision. His poems have sold hitherto only in manuscript. I have never read them, but a friend at my desire procured the Sweep Song. There is one to a Tiger, which I heard recited, beginning,

> Tiger, Tiger, burning bright,
> Thro' the deserts of the night,

which is glorious. But alas! I have not the book, for the man is flown, whither I know not, to Hades, or a Mad House. But I must look on him as one of the most extraordinary persons of the age." Blake's *Songs of Innocence* were published in 1789, and the *Songs of Experience* in 1794.

Lyrical ballads. — The work of the Lake Poets, as Robert Southey, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and William Wordsworth are often called, began during the seventeen-nineties. Their writings will be dealt with more fully in the chapter on the Early Nineteenth Century. But they were well under way in their labors before 1799. The incidents of the French Revolution affected them greatly. Southey, sick at heart at what "every day's report" brought of human wrong and human misery, and wild with resentment at "what man has made of man," published in 1794 his revolutionary poem entitled *Wat Tyler*.

The most noteworthy thing done by Coleridge and Wordsworth during this decade was the joint publication of a volume

under the title of *Lyrical Ballads*. This little book, in the first edition, contained Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, and Wordsworth's *We are Seven* and *Tintern Abbey*. In these poems, and others included in the same volume, four in all by Coleridge and nineteen in all by Wordsworth, are found the chief elements of romanticism; namely, love of man, love of animals, love of nature generally, interest in the supernatural, interest in the grotesque, intense curiosity about the beautiful and about the insoluble mystery and strangeness that colors not only those things farthest from ordinary experience, but also those met with in the most common situations of everyday life. "The imagination," Wordsworth said, "may be called forth as imperiously by incidents in the humblest departments of life," as those in the seas "out of place, out of time," of Coleridge's fancy. Wordsworth's theory of writing was that things taken from humble and rustic life were the best of all things to write of, and that they should be clothed "in a selection of language really used by men" at the same time that they should be so tinted by the imagination that "ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect."

Thomas Campbell. — A curious illustration of how hard the eighteenth-century methods and ideals died in literature is in the work of Thomas Campbell, a Scotchman, who hoped to be called "the Pope of Glasgow." In 1799 he published what amounted to an essay in verse, after the manner of Thomson and Gray and Pope, correct in its formal rhythm, but artificial in its feeling for nature, and showing his great annoyance at the revolutionary requirements for poetic language which Wordsworth was setting up. This poem was called *Pleasures of Hope*. We shall see later that, after a visit to Germany, Campbell returned and out-Wordsworthed Wordsworth in the high-spiritedness of his romantic ballads.

Eighteenth-century drama. — We must not overlook the dramatic work of the eighteenth century. William Congreve's splendid career as a dramatist belongs in time to the seventeenth century, his best works being two comedies of manners, *Love for Love*, and *The Way of the World*, published in 1695 and 1700, respectively. Yet he is rather of the time of Sheridan and Goldsmith, a full seventy-five years later, in his spirit, than of the time of Dryden. George Farquhar followed Congreve with *The Constant Couple*, in 1700, *The Recruiting Officer*, in 1706, and *The Beaux' Stratagem*, in 1707. Farquhar himself said that "Comedy is no more at present than a well-framed tale handsomely told as an agreeable vehicle for counsel or reproof." This was his theory of comic drama, but in practice his reproof of the age overflowed with the brilliant wit and cheerfulness of its author. The hero of *The Recruiting Officer* was thought to be Farquhar himself.

In 1728 John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* appeared. The song with its two lines

> How happy could I be with either,
> Were t'other dear Charmer away!

has helped to continue interest in the songs, at least, of this opera until this day. Swift had once remarked, "What an odd, pretty sort of thing a Newgate pastoral might make," and Gay produced the *Beggar's Opera* in demonstration of such a pastoral.

Addison's ponderous drama, entitled *Cato*, was brought out in 1713. It was received with an enthusiasm on the part of the public which is astonishing to us now. The drama lacks all vivacity; yet Voltaire called it "the first rational tragedy." It was French in its form, and in all ways satisfied the demands of French classic drama that it should imitate the

Greek drama. *Cato* had the approving smile of all the great among Addison's contemporaries and placed the English stage securely in a position which was approved on the continent as well as at home. Doubtless this had much to do with the temporary popularity of the drama of *Cato*.

Finally, Goldsmith and Sheridan appeared. These men between 1768 and 1778 produced dramas that will, apparently, be acted for all time, for they are as popular now as they were one hundred and thirty years ago, and not only that, but they contain representations of the abiding characteristics of human life and mind. Goldsmith's *Good-natured Man* and *She Stoops to Conquer*, and Sheridan's *The Rivals* and *School for Scandal* are so well-known that they need no dwelling upon. They speak for themselves yearly upon both the popular and the "high-brow" stage. Their authors were Irishmen, and the Irish grace and wit permeate every scene they wrote. To say that they were extremely popular throughout the entire nineteenth century, though that century demanded a very different kind of drama from its own authors, is to say all that is necessary in evidence of their permanent qualities.

The closet drama and the stage play. — The drama from that time on to the present has been clearly either a thing to be played or not to be played, either a stage or a "closet" drama. It is evident from Sheridan's success what it is that will always admit of successful revival, and what is, therefore, a stage play and not a poetic drama alone. The Elizabethans invested poetry with such a glory and such force that the speaker must act it. Dryden weakened the poetic effect in his dramas, and Otway and Rowe, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in their dramas wrote little that could be more than merely declaimed, not acted, though Otway's *Venice Preserved* is still

occasionally staged. The reason for the lack of success in the playing is that the " poetic " drama usually has in it more of the lamp and the scholar than of true poetry. This is the situation: that henceforward the poetic drama and the stage play follow separate lines, the former holding as strictly to the Shakespearean tradition as the ability of the writer will allow, and the latter undertaking to reveal its characters and suggest its action in language as nearly as possible like the changing language of real life. So much is this true of the stage play that in its problem-play aspect it often fails to be a beautiful thing (the poetic form must be beautiful to be poetic), and degenerates into something deeply and often offensively ugly.

III. The Essayists

Journalism. — Daniel Defoe begins the list of essayists, as well as of poets, in the eighteenth century. His *Shortest Way with the Dissenters* started a new form of literature, written with the desire of reaching all who read. It did not begin the essay, but it did begin the journalistic " article."

Two years after the publication of this essay, Defoe began issuing his journal, the *Review*. It was published twice a week for a year, and then three times a week for seven years. This was not the first English journal, but was the first to give thoughtful comment upon affairs of public interest, that is, to perform the editorial function. Defoe in this journal dealt with some questions of morals through the fiction of a Club, called the Scandalous Club, and this probably suggested to Richard Steele the publication of his journal, named the *Tatler*, which began publication in 1709. Steele ran the *Tatler* very successfully, so much so that the periodical essay became an established force in literature. After the *Tatler's* success had been made

certain, the cautious Joseph Addison began contributing to the paper. The purpose of Steele, who was much the more vigorous writer of these two, upon questions of the day, was to restore to society the sound and wholesome tone which it had had before the Restoration. This periodical was intended for women as well as for men, and Steele did a great deal to break down the weak vanity of the women of the time and to raise the tone of the speech by men concerning women.

After about two years the *Tatler* was succeeded by the *Spectator*, March 1, 1711. Of the 555 papers published in this last-named periodical, Addison wrote 274 and Steele wrote 236. Pope contributed one paper. Other contributors were John Hughes and Eustace Budgell, the latter furnishing many ideas to his cousin, Joseph Addison. The *Spectator* gave to literature the " Club " of the Sir Roger de Coverley papers; but it must never be forgotten that Steele was responsible for Addison's becoming a journalist. The *Spectator* was succeeded by the *Guardian*, the *Englishman*, the *Reader*, the *Plebeian*, the *Theatre*, and the *Spinster* (concerning the woolen trade), all edited by "Dick" Steele. Steele had the quick and impulsive temperament of the fearless later essayists, Burke and Ruskin and Carlyle, while Addison, the younger man, had the more severely classic temperament of Bacon, Dryden, and Pope, though in originality he was inferior to each of these.

Joseph Addison. — The Sir Roger de Coverley papers have been much read in the schools. Englishmen love them deeply. They describe the club life which the average Englishman hugely enjoys, and the characters of Sir Roger and of Will Honeycomb are typical of men he sees daily. Many " gentle readers " outside of England are enthusiastic over them, but the matter in the papers is so slight and the language so evidently weighed and polished beyond all need for such light matter that popular

enthusiasm for them anywhere but in England is difficult to arouse. However, these papers ought to be known and studied by those who are anxious for correctness of form in English writing. Here is better English prose than in either Dryden or Sir Thomas Browne; and it is doubtful if any English prose has equaled the best prose of the century of Addison. But much more important in the history of literature than the Sir Roger de Coverley papers are Addison's essays upon the Imagination, also published in the *Spectator*.

The *Spectator* and its contemporaries are significant in the history of the short-story. Many of the articles in these periodicals were intended to give point to some moral question, and the writers considered the most pointed way to handle these questions was to relate some brief story, with its meaning clearly indicated. Take these stories out of their didactic framework, and a passably good modern short-story is the result.

The greatest writers, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Cervantes, Hugo, have never founded "schools." But the second-rate men, like Addison, and even Pope, with their altogether too "Augustan," too "polite," too formal and mechanically brilliant style, did not fail to draw about them a number of imitators, in whose weaker minds, because they had not the power of thought of their masters, thought degenerated into something cold and vapid, and style degenerated into mannerism.

Jonathan Swift. — A greater mind than that of Defoe or of Steele or of Addison was that of Jonathan Swift, a man of English parentage, but Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral at Dublin, Ireland. Thackeray could find no other man so great in that epoch as Swift. Addison did not attain his own faultless style until after he had become closely acquainted with the writings of Swift; and Steele was so much influenced by the acidulous Dean

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HOLY CROSS. CISTERCIAN ABBEY IN TIPPERARY, IRELAND

that the *Tatler* printed much of Steele's work as by one of Swift's characters, Isaac Bickerstaff. Many men were talented in the Great Britain of the time of Swift, but he alone was the great genius, — the most powerfully original man of his time. Unfortunately, Swift chose always to be a satirist, and hence much that he wrote is not acceptable to the average reader. The greatest of his essays was *The Tale of a Tub*, a biting satire upon criticism, describing in vitriolic phrases the Goddess of Criticism drawn in a chariot by geese. *The Battle of the Books* is almost as famous. It is a mock-heroic account of a desperate battle between ancient and modern books. These two essays were published in 1704, though written a few years earlier.

Oliver Goldsmith. — An author with a clear and simple style was Oliver Goldsmith, who, after contributing to a number of periodical journals, started one of his own, known as *The Bee*. In this he published many *Essays* which were later collected in book form. One of the periodicals produced his *Chinese Letters*, afterwards published in 1762 as *The Citizen of the World*. These papers represented what an Oriental saw and thought while visiting England. Goldsmith was an excellent sketcher of character, as well as a mild critic of society. He was not able to make the characters he created act very vigorously; nor did he see in society the corruption which Swift so clearly saw and poured burning maledictions upon, and which Cowper was later so deeply to bemoan. But "Where is now a man who can pen an essay with such ease and elegance as Goldsmith?" asked Dr. Johnson.

Samuel Johnson. — The *Essays* of Montaigne had been translated from the French into English by John Florio as early as 1693, and had been used by both Shakespeare and Bacon. Montaigne's essays had been the reflections of a personal view of himself and of human society, while those of Bacon

had depended for their weight upon impersonal authority. Bacon is full of reference to others for support of his thought, while Montaigne judged all ideas and all moods by his own thought and his own feeling. Most of the essayists of the days of Swift and Steele and Goldsmith were more of the type of Montaigne than of Bacon. But Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his periodicals, the *Rambler* and the *Idler*, turned aside from the grace and lightness which he acknowledged to be so good in Goldsmith, to the ponderous and authoritative tone of Bacon. Still, many of his essays are most readable. One on *The Advantages of Living in a Garret* is very ingenious and very entertaining in thought, even though heavy in style. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* is a collection of unequal value, for many of the critical statements in the various lives are false, though many others are the truest ever uttered, and most of them are nobly said.

Dr. Johnson's style is not so bad as it is generally said to be, and it gradually grew less big-worded. He was over-languaged, it is true, but he regretted it, for during his later years he once said of Robertson, the historian, " If his style is bad, that is, too big words and too many of them, I am afraid he caught it of me."

Edmund Burke. — The richly splendid, sumptuous, majestic writing of Edmund Burke, in both his letters and speeches, really constitutes something very like a series of essays. The speeches, being like essays, were not often listened to attentively, and, by many who were most interested in what he had to say, not *listened* to at all. Charles James Fox tells how members of the House of Commons would rise and leave the House when Burke came to speak, but the next morning would wear to shreds the printed copies of his speech, so keen were they to grasp the significance of every word he had uttered. Burke, paradoxically, was the world's greatest orator, but a rather poor speaker.

His *Inquiry into the Nature of the Sublime and the Beautiful* is of great value. It is one of the very earliest studies in æsthetics which is based upon psychological thinking, and it was the germ of nearly all of later speculation upon the principles of art criticism.

Two of Burke's pamphlets, *Observations on the Present State of the Nation* and *Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents*, show their author to have been the foremost of all the effective political philosophers of that day. His speeches on *American Taxation* and on *Conciliation with the American Colonies*, published in 1774, were of more than transitory interest, not to Americans alone, but to Englishmen as well, for many Englishmen, in spite of Dr. Johnson's answer, *Taxation no Tyranny*, even then believed that the revolt of the American colonies was a battle for English freedom everywhere, and many still believe that without that revolt there would not now be in the world a "great English Republic," the United States, worthy to take large part in the building of man's future. But Burke's three greatest works were published between 1790 and 1797, — *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, *Letter to a Noble Lord*, and *Letters on a Regicide Peace*. To Burke in these papers, there was no dawn of liberty in the French Revolution, but a bloody sunset of the nations sinking into gloomy twilight.

Burke was a man of most rare ability, the greatest prose writer of the end of the century, as Swift had been the greatest of its beginning. Perhaps De Quincey comes as near as any to inheriting a small share of the wondrously balanced and vehement and picturesque style of this master. Yet Burke was a master without a "school," for his genius, unlike Addison's, was greater than his talent, and, as we have already said, it is only the second-rate man who makes a school of writers. Beside him, De Quincey is weak. Burke was the greatest of true

rhetoricians. The tradition that Demosthenes is the greatest breaks down in comparison with Burke when one really reads them both. But if one desires to secure (as he can secure it) a mastery of his own language, he will be greatly aided by studying *all* the essayists of this period, and not, as Franklin did, Addison alone. Few, perhaps not any, great writers have written essays only, unless we except Montaigne; but nearly all the English essayists of the Eighteenth Century, whom we have mentioned, produced at least great essays.

IV. The Novelists

1. *Anticipations of the Novel*

Subject matter and methods. — If in such a poet as Wordsworth we learn the glory of the commonplace, in such a poet as Milton secure a vision of the ideal, and in the essayists find a mastery of our own language, it is in the pages of the novelists that we gain a better knowledge of human nature. It is said by Professor Saintsbury that the three chief motives which control human conduct are "love, valor, and religion." It has also been pointed out that in the stories associated with the British King Arthur we have illustration of this fact; that (1) in the stories connected with Arthur and the Round Table we find working the motive of valor, (2) in the stories connected with Lancelot and Guinevere we find the motive of love, and (3) in the stories associated with the search for the Holy Grail we find the motive of religion is uppermost; so that in the whole cycle of stories three motives are combined. The simplest reflection upon the motives which control men and women in fiction shows that these *are* the dominant motives in the work of the novelists. One of these motives, or a combination of two or three of them, will set a man or a woman or a group

of them upon a quest, adventures will follow, and in the end there is achievement of the purpose, or else the characters come to grief. Such is the formula of what we loosely call the romantic novel. Characters revealing themselves chiefly through conversation or through what is said about them, rather than personages attempting and achieving or failing to achieve deeds, and living in more commonplace circumstances than do the romance heroes, — such is the formula of the novel commonly and loosely called realistic.

It should be understood by the student that no such thing as exact realism is possible in literature or in any other way of reproducing experience. This is true for three reasons: first, no man is so perfectly equipped in his organism as to be able to have experience of things as they are externally, without modification by his own mental states; second, no man's language is a perfect medium for conveying to another even what he has really experienced; and, third, no one to whom this modified experience is conveyed by means of language is so adapted to the make-up of the writer that he can have within his mind the experience which the writer attempts to convey to him. Hence by the time the reading is done, the experience is at least three removes from reality itself. And yet some men have been so finely equipped to see, and so highly endowed to understand, and so superbly trained to express what they have seen and understood, that we are willing, because of the close likeness to life which we observe in their books, to deceive ourselves into accepting their pictures of what has occurred as if they were " the *real* thing."

Beginning of the novel. — The true " novel " did not exist until about 1740, but it had many anticipations. M. Jules Jusserand, French ambassador to the United States, has written a volume entitled *The Novel in the Time of Shake-*

speare, but it is difficult for us to accept Sidney's *Arcadia*, Lyly's *Euphues*, and some rogue stories by Nash and others as very like what we know in the eighteenth and nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the novel.

Shakespeare himself had more to do with the ancestry of the novel than did his contemporaries, though Ben Jonson was not far behind him in this. Shakespeare's insistence upon man's own character as responsible for his deeds, that "character is destiny," resulted in deep interest in the individual and in what actions flow from him and what motives are the sources of these individual actions. Ben Jonson's isolation of a character, too, for description in full within his plays, had a similar effect of concentrating attention upon character for its own sake. Then followed strong interest in men's lives, biographies, autobiographies in the form of "Memoirs" chiefly, and, finally, the "Character" of the seventeenth century in the writings of John Earle and Sir Thomas Overbury and others, — the interest having passed now from Shakespeare's individual character to that of a type. In the periodical essays, next, came the treatment of typical characters, what they were, how they were affected by society about them, and what they did. If the de Coverley papers should be detached from their essay setting and published in the continuous form of the novel, they would affect the reader as a rather tame form of "novel of manners" affects him.

But Bunyan, Defoe, and Swift are the actual progenitors of the English novel as we understand it to-day. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, and *Journal of the Plague Year*, and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, are the books which, in themselves much superior to many things which pass for novels, brought to birth the work of Samuel Richardson and of Henry Fielding.

Classification of the novel. — A generous classification of novels according to method would place them under two headings: (1) autobiographical, and (2) biographical, or "that in which an invisible narrator tells a story in which some one else whose character he lays bare for us is the hero." Then there is the "historical novel," which may follow the method of either of the other two, but tries to mingle with the adventures of an imaginary person or group of persons the life of actual historical personages.

All three of the men mentioned above, Bunyan, Defoe, and Swift, wrote in the autobiographical form (though not always in the first person), as we might expect, because of the interest in the individual which had already been aroused, — and who would be supposed to know the individual so well as he himself? They were undertaking to make fiction important by making it seem truth, and the narration of what claimed to be autobiographical would be likely to seem true. The only one of the three in whom the cynicism of the teller of rogue stories and the extravagance of the medieval romances survived was Swift, but his work was a satire, and no satire ever claims to be literal truth or even a literal picture of it in its facts, but truth only in meaning. We have already spoken of the bringing of unity into fiction by John Bunyan. It now remains to say that he gave reasonableness to his story by the simple and artistic use of minute detail drawn from the familiar incidents and scenes of English life and woven into the texture of the main imaginative current of the tale. What he wrote has seemed not real but *as if* real to countless readers the world over.

Daniel Defoe. — Defoe was a great genius, though unfortunately in many ways a pretty poor sort of man, because there was so much of thorough dishonesty in his life. But his work in fiction has in one respect never been surpassed, namely, in

the manner in which he makes us acquainted, in *Robinson Crusoe*, with the details of the experience of his characters. In no other book, except in some of those of Jane Austen, is there such a scrupulous and faithful presentation to the reader of facts as the personage in this novel is said to experience them. We learn of the island, and all things upon it, just as Crusoe learned of it, and all is, we are convinced, as it would have been if a shipwrecked man had actually been there. The book seemed all the more real to readers in Defoe's time, for Crusoe had been the name of an actual schoolfellow of the author, and a man named Selkirk, or Selcraig, had actually been left upon the shore of the island of Juan Fernandez in some such way as Defoe describes. And then the book was most important, too, for the Englishman, because he took the whole story as a sort of symbol of his life, with its struggles, successful and failing, and with the Englishman's strong faith at last in the coming out right of all things in the hands of a just Power who repaid patience, industry, and honesty with high reward.

The *Memoirs of a Cavalier* and the *Journal of the Plague Year* were *historical* fiction, the first so much so that illustrious persons after its publication thought it was a record of genuine facts written between 1632 and 1648 by one who was engaged in the affairs recorded, and the second so much so that reputable historians have quoted it as documentary, and many libraries even yet catalogue it among the histories instead of under fiction. The so-called " naturalists " in nineteenth-century France have never excelled Defoe in the *Plague Year* and in another novel called *Moll Flanders*. The last-named book is very coarse, but it could not have been a picture of the times if it had not been coarse. Defoe was the author of at least two hundred and fifty-four separate and distinct publications, but those mentioned above are the best representatives of his works.

Jonathan Swift. — Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* was a savage piece of irony directed at his king, "his own dear country," and "the animal called man." Swift wrote during part of the reign of William III on through the reigns of Queen Anne and George I into that of George II. It has been said of him that he "is the typical instance of the powerlessness of pure intellect to secure any but intellectual triumphs"; but how any one can read Swift and not recognize that his intellect is working always under the stress of the most powerful emotions, is difficult to conceive. No man ever tortured his own spirit more than did Swift, and he finally died insane. While the adventures portrayed in *Gulliver* are fascinating in the extreme, yet it is not possible for us to think of them as intended utterly to humiliate man without our feeling that when they were written, the author was near the insanity which afflicted his last days. But Swift was a genius of the highest order. He went farther into the "insufficiency of mankind" than has any other man. He was endowed with an almost towering common sense, and he wrote such bitterly effective English prose as no man before him had ever penned. With all this, Swift was not a great philosopher; even the speculations in the third section of *Gulliver's Travels* were thought out largely with the help of Doctor Arbuthnot, the physician who was one of the small number of human beings for whom Swift had any respect. And, further, Swift was so inhuman in his attitude to human life that his satire "quivers and reddens with anger in every line." The story of Gulliver as mere story is for children; but its bitter irony directed against human odiousness and littleness is evident to the thoughtful student. If one should seek extremes in satire, he would need only compare and contrast Chaucer and Swift.

Swift was one of the most original of writers. The

place of *Gulliver's Travels* in the history of the novel is rather indirect, because it consists primarily in the fact that it was the wonderful unusualness of the content of the book which made it a popular success. It stimulated to originality the work of other writers, though the travel and adventure and autobiographical features of it had already become established in the course of the development of novel writing.

Goldsmith and Johnson. — Oliver Goldsmith and Doctor Johnson should be mentioned here: Goldsmith for his *Vicar of Wakefield,* Johnson for his *Rasselas, a Prince of Abyssinia.* They should be spoken of in this connection because they faithfully tried to be novelists. The *Vicar of Wakefield* was written sometime between 1762 and 1766, and therefore after Richardson and Fielding had scored their great successes. And yet the book is a kind of combination of essay, oration, sermon, poem, and novelette. Goldsmith could not help being a poet, even when he tried to write a prose story. Goethe said of the charming optimism of Goldsmith, that it is that view of and attitude to life "which in the end leads us back from all the mistaken paths of life." Johnson would never have thought of saying what he wanted to say within the framework of a novel if it had not been that the public, fed upon Fielding and Richardson, were clamoring for food in that form only. It may be that the fact that Johnson wrote *Rasselas* in order to pay the expenses of his mother's funeral explains in part its melancholy tone. The book is a plaintive and adverse judgment upon many circumstances and ideals of human life. Yet it is wholesome and wise in its moral reflections. It is not very exciting in its story. But it was popular and ran through seven or eight reprints during its author's lifetime. It is looked upon as one of the minor classics of our language.

2. *The Real Novel*

The lack of the ability of the playwrights of the first half of the eighteenth century to continue to entertain the public "led to the craving on the part of English readers for an amusement which should be to them what the seeing of comedies had been to their parents, and of tragedies to their grandparents." This amusement and a great deal more than mere amusement was furnished English readers by the four great novelists, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne.

Samuel Richardson. — Samuel Richardson's three novels were *Pamela*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Sir Charles Grandison*. All are slow reading for a busy person of to-day; the best of the three is *Clarissa Harlowe*, which was published in seven volumes. But they are important, for they marked the definite beginning of "the most entertaining and the most versatile" of all the types of modern literature. The novel is the most read of all the forms of literature, and in importance it at least rivals the drama. The first of the three novels by Richardson took its name from its chief character, Pamela, a servant girl. The book was in the form of letters addressed by this young and sensible servant girl to her parents. It was intended as a sort of compendium to aid people, especially the rather illiterate, in their correspondence, and at the same time to be a moral guide. Clara Reeve, a clever story-writer, said in her *Progress of Romance*, published in 1785, that "The Novel gives a familiar relation of such things as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend or to ourselves; and the perfection of it is to represent every scene in so easy and natural a manner and to make them appear so probable as to deceive us into a persuasion (at least while we are reading) that all is real,

until we are affected by the joys or distresses of the persons in the story as if they were our own." This is not a description of all novels, but it is a good one of *Pamela* and the rest of Richardson's. In *Pamela* the author attacks conventional notions of dignity, even in his choice of a title, and for his material he goes straight to the heart of common folk in the ordinary circumstances of life. The letter form, however, while the most common, is the least likely to be the form in which people in actual life would reveal such a story.

Richardson's novels are all studies in normal life, yet they are psychological analyses of it to its very roots. For this reason many continental critics, especially the French, have pronounced the author of *Clarissa Harlowe* to be the best of all novelists, and one of these critics, Diderot, even ranked Richardson with Homer and Euripides as an extraordinary genius. This is too high praise; yet for minute and accurate observation of common life, Richardson has never been surpassed. Strange to say, the psychological novel, such as Richardson's, while considered by foremost critics to be the most important of all kinds, has rarely been popular. What gave those of Richardson popularity in their day was their newness and their absolute faithfulness to the very hour in which the readers lived. Here was held up to man's (or, chiefly, woman's) nature, for the first time a mirror that reflected that life with closest accuracy.

Henry Fielding. — Had Henry Fielding waited until after the publication of Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, it may be that he would never have entered the field of novel writing, for the success of that book was so phenomenal that he would hardly have dared ridicule its author as he ventured to do in *The History of Joseph Andrews*. Fielding said that he wrote this book in imitation of the manner of Cervantes, and he called it a comic epic poem in prose. The book was intended as a burlesque,

just as *Don Quixote*, by the Spaniard, Cervantes, had been so intended. Richardson had not been able to free himself entirely from the conventional prejudices of his time and so had rewarded Pamela for her virtue by marrying her, in the end, to the Squire, even though the Squire was a rascal. This was too much for the bold and free-minded Fielding to find in a book claiming to advance morals, and he therefore set out to write up the adventures of Joseph Andrews, Pamela's brother, as a burlesque upon her adventures. But *Joseph Andrews* turned out to be more than a jest upon another author's weakness. It became a satire upon foolish society, and in addition it created a Christian gentleman and scholar in Parson Adams whom no ridiculing can cause us to fail to respect and admire.

The chief one of Fielding's works is *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*, published in February of 1749. This is a great book, because of the largeness of its design, because it is a picture of man's life, and because the picture shows both the right way and the wrong way of living that life. Tom Jones, Blifil, Squire Western, his daughter Sophia, and the pedantic pedagogues Square and Thwackum are characters drawn exactly to the lines of life. In both the adventures and the talk of some of these characters there is a good deal that is coarse, but as in the case of Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, the book would not have been a faithful picture of its day if it had not contained coarseness, and the sound thing about it is that Fielding never glosses over the coarseness and evil which he depicts, — he never fails to let us know what his judgment is concerning evil, or to give us sufficient data to make a solidly based judgment for ourselves. Mid-eighteenth century life in England is, in this book, painted from life, and the social historian never fails to pay his tribute to its writer for the life-likeness of the portrayal. *Tom Jones* is not far from being the world's greatest

novel. Perhaps it is the greatest, though Walter Pater gives the palm to Thackeray's *Henry Esmond.*

In *Amelia*, Fielding's third novel, excellence in woman is what the author sought to depict. Patient and saintly is the woman whom he describes, and the book is full of shadows. Yet it is humorous, too, though with the sort of humor that leads to thought and to an " undersmile " only, rather than to laughter. Fielding wrote other books, but these three are the excellent ones. He had been a dramatist before he became a novelist. From his dramatic failures he had learned this much: how to combine men and women in circumstances that would reveal their characters, and how to adjust minor crises to one another in the development of a greater and inclusive crisis in their lives. But the novelist had yet to learn that the fatal " average reader " resents episodes or turnings aside from the main current of the story. Even *Tom Jones* suffers from this, great as the book is in all other respects. Fielding called himself " an historian of human nature."

Tobias Smollett. — The three successful books of Tobias Smollett were *The Adventures of Roderick Random*, *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*, and the *Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*. In the first two there are many good things, in the third some great things. In all three are many amusing things. *Roderick Random* is the first English novel of the sea, but the American Cooper was yet to teach the English novelists many things in connection with the sea. Throughout all three of the books there are typical sea- and lands-men, most of them caricatures rather than characters, however. A Scotch schoolmaster advertises that he can teach Englishmen how to pronounce correctly the English language. We owe to Smollett the first novel of the sea, the first national types, and many of the mechanical contrivances of horror that later distinguished

the work of the "school of terror" in romance. *Humphrey Clinker* is the best of the books by this author. It is comic, but it also is philosophic. It has within it few of the things that make many of the pages of Smollett's other books disagreeable to many present-day readers.

Laurence Sterne. — Laurence Sterne, a man richly playful in his wit, wrote *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent.*, and *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy.* Like Shakespeare, Sterne had a most original faculty for helping himself to anything he could find in others' books that would serve his purposes. It was from the old French and English humorists and from the Queen Anne wits, especially Dean Swift, that many of his witticisms were "lifted," but they were all put to good use and made his own witticisms, for, as Lowell has written, "'Tis his at last who says it best." Both Smollett and Sterne, as well as Fielding, were much indebted to Cervantes for their kindly satiric view of life, though Smollett degenerated at times into odious vileness. Sterne's works are formless. But he did not intend in them to tell plot-stories, but only to record the author's views and opinions. He has created immortal characters, of whom Uncle Toby is the chief. He has also written some sentences that might be thought to have come from greater sources. "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," for example, is not from the Bible, but from Laurence Sterne.

The *Sentimental Journey* zigzagged through much of the revolt of the emotions against the coldly severe moral and intellectual tendencies of the age, as well as through France and Italy. Fortunately, to keep him from being "thought" by some unthinking person to be a mere imitator of Rousseau, Sterne zigzags through a great deal of the highly ludicrous also. Seventeen hundred and sixty-eight was the year of the *Senti-*

mental Journey's publication. Only a few years before this Jean Jacques Rousseau published the book in which he had said, "The Heart is good; listen to it; suffer yourself to be led by Sensibility and you will never stray, or your strayings will be of a creditable sort." This is right enough so far as it goes, but it led Rousseau into sentimental whining, while Sterne never made such doctrine the ground for self-pity. To hoax and to uncover absurdities was his purpose, even when he dwelt upon real distress. Incidentally, it should be said that a chapter or two in this second book of Sterne's cannot be excelled in any comparison with other pages of excellent prose.

The school of terror. — Of Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, William Beckford's *History of the Caliph Vathek*, Matthew Gregory Lewis's *Monk*, and Mrs. Anne Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*, we need only say here that they were foundation stones for the rather hideous pseudo-supernatural structure known as the "school of terror." The first of these books was printed in 1764 and the last in 1794; the other two, between these dates. These works were early called gothic, in the somewhat distorted sense of grotesque and barbarous. Into this grotesquely barbarous work came elements of the pseudo-supernatural and of the eighteenth-century German handling of the medieval; but it takes a twentieth-century reader's hardest endeavors to induce an attitude of anything else than amusement at what the late years of the eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth century shuddered at as unspeakably terrible.

Frances Burney and Maria Edgeworth. — Frances Burney was greatly praised by her contemporaries, including even Doctor Johnson. She was the first of writers to show that in the art of novel writing women have a place established beyond cavil. Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth, Jane Austen, Charlotte

Brontë, George Eliot, Mrs. Elizabeth Gaskell, May Sinclair, — it is a renowned list. Frances Burney's best-known novel is *Evelina*.. Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent*, printed in 1800, is packed with unpremeditated humor. Miss Edgeworth is the creator of the international novel, made so famous to-day by Henry James. Irish character is perfectly delineated in her work. Sir Walter Scott thought her wonderful. She will be mentioned again, for she made straight the way for the almost omniscient and errorless Jane Austen.

V. Philosophers and Historians

The philosophers in Great Britain during this century were the Earl of Shaftesbury, Bishop Berkeley, Bishop Butler, and David Hume. The historians were William Robertson and Edward Gibbon. Hume was a historian as well as a philosopher. Edmund Burke and Adam Smith might well be called political philosophers.

Philosophy. — Shaftesbury's name is always associated with the philosophy of optimism. He had much effect upon Alexander Pope. Shaftesbury reasoned about beauty in the arts, and tried to harmonize the beautiful, the good, and the true. He was less psychological than Burke in reasoning about the beautiful, but his theories still survive in the thinking of those who are interested in the arts. Bishop Berkeley questioned the real existence of matter in quite a Platonic fashion, and has been the inspirer of numberless thinner thinkers in the same fashion. Butler, in his *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature*, attempted to harmonize authority and reason. His book is still used as a textbook in a college here and there. Henry Drummond in the nineteenth century was stimulated by him to write a very popu-

lar book entitled *Natural Law in the Spiritual World.* David Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* limited all our knowledge to the phenomena revealed to us by experience. His book was later published under the title of *Concerning the Human Understanding.* Burke's political philosophy was revealed in the speeches and letters we have discussed in connection with the essayists of this century.

Adam Smith's greatest work was the *Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776. It has been affirmed that if this book had been written ten years earlier, the American Revolution would not have occurred. In it Smith maintained that labor is the source of wealth, and that the laborer should be given complete freedom to pursue his own interests in his own way. All laws, he claimed, to restrict the freedom of the laborer are stumbling-blocks in the path of the increasing wealth of a nation. Adam Smith was the founder of the science of political economy, and also the first strongly and intelligently to set forth the theory of free trade.

History. — David Hume's *History of Great Britain* was written in polished and noble style, and was so interesting that it was read as eagerly as if it were a novel. He was not an accurate historian, but his work is of great value because his philosophical reflections are uttered in such a way as to be easily understood by the general reader. William Robertson wrote a *History of the Reign of Charles V.* Robertson was most graceful in style, and greatly influenced Carlyle, — not in style, but in historical research. But the inimitably great historian was Edward Gibbon. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is not far short of being the most famous historical work ever written. Certainly it is the most eminent of the eighteenth century. Professor Freeman, himself a prominent historian, has said of Gibbon, "He remains the one historian of the eighteenth century whom

modern research has neither set aside nor threatened to set aside." He was scholarly, unprejudiced, — and interesting. "Whatever else is read, Gibbon must be read too." And he will always be read, both for his facts and his interpretations of facts, and for his richly colored and splendidly forceful style.

James Boswell, as the historian of one man, ought here to be mentioned. He wrote a *Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* It is the general custom to speak lightly of Boswell, but, strangely enough, the detractor is quite likely to say, and say truly, that his book is one of the best among a dozen or less of the greatest books in the world. It is a very wonderful biography of a most remarkable man.

Perhaps Defoe might be mentioned as a comic historian; *The Political History of the Devil* is his book in this field. Current history met a satirist in this book, at least.

The eighteenth century in America. — In eighteenth-century America, makers of history were doing some important writing in the English language. In that century we find Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography;* the state papers of George Washington; the *Declaration of Independence*, written chiefly by Thomas Jefferson; the papers of Alexander Hamilton and James Madison in the *Federalist;* and Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*, written in reply to Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution.* Also there were the writings of Jonathan Edwards, particularly his *Freedom of the Will.* This book has given Edwards the reputation of having been a great metaphysician. Europeans are divided as to our greatest thinker, opinion running between Hamilton and Edwards. Very much more attention than this should be given by the student to these American writers, but it is the chief purpose of this book to present the work of writers in Great Britain.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What were the leading features of eighteenth-century life and thought?

2. Its principal authors may be grouped under what heads?

3. Into how many periods may the poetry of the eighteenth century be divided, and who do you think was the chief poet in each period?

4. What place does Pope hold among English poets?

5. Learn one poem by Thomas Gray or one by William Collins, and recite it.

6. What is "romance"? What does "romantic" mean?

7. Learn one poem by Robert Burns or one by William Blake, and recite it.

8. Find out all you can about the *Lyrical Ballads* published jointly by Coleridge and Wordsworth.

9. Who were the foremost English dramatists of the eighteenth century, and what plays of that time are often staged to-day?

10. What essay which you have read of those written during the eighteenth century do you like best, and why?

11. Describe the work of Swift; of Dr. Johnson; of Edmund Burke.

12. What is the business of the novel? When did it first begin to appear as a great type of literature?

13. Characterize Goldsmith, Swift, Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding.

14. What do you know of the work of Gibbon, of Hume, and of Adam Smith?

15. Tell all you can concerning the literature which was being produced in America during the eighteenth century.

READING LIST FOR THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

POETRY

POPE, The Rape of the Lock, and Essay on Man. In *Selections from Pope*, edited by Edward Bliss Reed.

GRAY, Elegy in a Country Churchyard. In *Gray's Poems*, edited by John Bradshaw.

WILLIAM COLLINS, Ode to Evening. In *The Poems of Collins*, edited by Christopher Stone.

WILLIAM COWPER, The Diverting History of John Gilpin. In *Cowper's Shorter Poems*, edited by W. T. Webb.

BURNS, The Cotter's Saturday Night. In *Selections from Burns*, edited by Lois G. Hufford.

WILLIAM BLAKE, The Tiger. In *Lyrical Poems of Blake*, edited by John Sampson.

COLERIDGE, The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. In *Christabel and Other Poems*, edited by Hannaford Bennett. (See next period.)

WORDSWORTH, Lines composed above Tintern Abbey. In *Selected Poems*, edited by Clara L. Thomson. (See next period.)

DRAMA

GOLDSMITH, *She Stoops to Conquer*. Edited by J. M. Dent.

SHERIDAN, *The Rivals*. Edited by Edmund Gosse.

ESSAY

ADDISON, *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*. Edited by Zelma Gray.

SWIFT, The Tale of a Tub. "Everyman's Library."

JOHNSON, The Advantages of Living in a Garret. In *Little Masterpieces*, edited by Bliss Perry.

BURKE, *Conciliation with the American Colonies*. Edited by Thomas Arkle Clark.

NOVEL

BUNYAN, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Winston's "Illustrated Handy Classics."

DEFOE, *Robinson Crusoe*. "Everyman's Library."

SWIFT, *Gulliver's Travels*. "Everyman's Library."

GOLDSMITH, *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Winston's "Illustrated Handy Classics."

RICHARDSON, *Pamela*. "Everyman's Library."

FIELDING, *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews*. Edited by George Saintsbury.

ECONOMICS AND HISTORY

ADAM SMITH, *Wealth of Nations*. "Everyman's Library."

GIBBON, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. "Everyman's Library."

BIOGRAPHY

BOSWELL, *Life of Dr. Johnson.* "Everyman's Library."

HELPFUL BOOKS ON THE PERIOD

The Age of Pope, John Dennis. (George Bell & Sons.)

Eighteenth Century Verse, Margaret Lynn. (The Macmillan Company.)

English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century, H. A. Beers. (Henry Holt & Co.)

Cambridge History of English Literature, Vols. IX and X. (Cambridge University Press.)

Life of Dr. Johnson, James Boswell. (J. M. Dent & Co.)

Life of Addison, W. J. Courthope. In "English Men of Letters" Series. (The Macmillan Company.)

English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century, W. M. Thackeray. (Smith, Elder, & Co.)

The Development of the English Novel, W. F. Cross. (The Macmillan Company.)

The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement, W. L. Phelps. (Ginn & Co.)

English Literature of the Eighteenth Century, T. S. Perry. (Harper's.)

See also Bibliography on The Essay, in Chapter IX, page 369.

CHAPTER VI

THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

1798–1837

I. General Characteristics

Energy, freedom, and poetry. — The nineteenth was a wonderful century. In nothing was it more wonderful than in the production of literature. The achievements of statesmanship, of commerce and industry, and of scientific invention grow to be commonplace not long after their practical use becomes general, but the achievements within the field of writing which are worthy to be termed literary, increase in power to stimulate admiration and in power to be of value in the conduct of everyday life. "By nothing is England so great as by her poetry," has become a truism. It is England's poetry that is distinctive in the literary field. "Genius," said Matthew Arnold, "is mainly an affair of energy, and poetry is mainly an affair of genius; therefore, a nation whose spirit is characterized by energy may well be eminent in poetry; — and we have Shakespeare." He goes on to say, "And what that energy, which is the life of genius, above everything demands and insists upon, is freedom; entire independence of all authority, prescription, and routine, — the fullest room to expand as it will." The days in which England's greatest names in poetry occur, the names of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Tennyson, and Browning, are days in which England's citizens enjoyed their greatest freedom

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of thought and of action, — the days of Edward III, of Elizabeth, of the Commonwealth, and of Victoria.

Grouping of the literature. — It is best to think of the literature of the entire nineteenth century as falling into three groups, from 1798 to 1837, from 1837 to 1890, and from 1890 on. The year 1837 is an excellent date at which to close the consideration of the literature of the early years of the century, not because Victoria came to the throne at that time, but because, though Wordsworth lived on until 1850, nearly all the writers who accomplished much of anything within the first third of the century were either dead or by 1837 had ceased writing anything of permanent value. Even Macaulay and Dickens had by 1837 barely gotten under way with their work, only the Essays on *Milton*, *Machiavelli*, and *Johnson* of Macaulay's important works having been published before 1840, and only the *Sketches by Boz* and a part of the *Pickwick Papers* having appeared before 1837 from the pen of Dickens.

It will be convenient, as well as give proper distinction to the works of the period from 1798 to 1837, to separate them into two large groups, the first to contain the poetry of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, and the novels of Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott, and the second to contain all the other works important enough to consider here. We shall call the groups: (1) The Greater Poets and Novelists, and (2)The Lesser Writers of the Period.

II. The Greater Poets and Novelists

1. *Poets*

The "Romantic Revival." — When we open the pages of the great poets of this immensely rich period, pages palpitating with the sensitiveness of imagination to all that the human

mind and heart had experienced, was experiencing, and longed to experience for the first time, we are face to face with the products of one of the most extraordinary movements in the history of man. This was the movement which is now in a hackneyed sort of way called the "revival of romance." It was hardly a revival or a renewal; it was, rather, a strong accentuation of what had never ceased to be a powerful human motive, namely, a curiosity about and wonder at and love for things that are *strange*.

This curiosity and wonder and love for the strange took all sorts of forms. In Keats there was a deep interest in the things that suggested the life of the old Greeks, as his *Ode on a Grecian Urn* so marvelously shows. In Sir Walter Scott there was profound attraction for things that had been important in the life of the medieval people, as his *Lay of the Last Minstrel* so fascinatingly reveals. In Coleridge there was an intense love for things that are supernatural, or that cannot be explained according to the laws of nature with which we are acquainted. This is illustrated by his *Ancient Mariner*. In Shelley there was the deepest desire for an understanding of the profoundly spiritual elements in the life of man and the universe, as is clearly evident in that poem of his which is beyond the range of praise, *Prometheus Unbound*. In Byron there was the endeavor, not only to express all of his own personal emotions, but the endeavor forcefully to communicate those emotions to others, and thereby to "exploit" himself upon the world, that is to say, selfishly to make all the world serve him and his desires, — so well illustrated in his dramas of *Manfred* and *Cain*. Then, in Wordsworth there was the turning back to Nature, as the mother of us all, as sympathetic with us, full of solace for us, full of the most interesting and helpful information for us, and full of deepest meaning to the mind that would see and

reflect, all of which is shown in what many think to be the greatest of all brief poems, the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality.*

All of these, then, were elements of this so-called " Romantic Revival." Interest in the beautiful and vital elements of life of the past, not the medieval past alone, but " classic " as well (for Keats was as much interested in Attic marble as Scott in Gothic aisle); interest in the so-called supernatural; interest in the truly spiritual; interest in all of one's own personal equipment; interest in the all-inclusive life of Mother Nature, — these were romantic interests.

Romanticism did furnish an escape from the commonplace; but it was just as much intensely interested in the commonplace, because it found new *meanings* in the commonplace. Anything new, or new to the individual in such way as to arouse high enthusiasm or newly expressive feeling of any sort, was " romantic." It still is, if one must have a name for it. Romanticism in that age was as much *speculative* as it was feelingful, however. Wordsworth and Shelley are the best evidence of that. Then, further, romanticism must not be thought of as *opposed* always to realism; " its peculiar quality lies in this, that in apparently detaching us from the real world, it seems to restore us to reality at a higher point." Its highest function was not so much " to rekindle the soul of the past," as it was " to reveal a soul where no eye had yet discerned it." Zest for discovery of all sorts was the deeply ingrained quality of the romantic movement at the close of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, as it had been in the Elizabethan days, and in all of the renaissance period, — out of which last-named period, in fact, we have not yet passed. Innovation of any sort is " romantic " to-day, as it always has been.

To discover the value and significance of neglected things

was one of the greatest missions of the "romantic age." It is sometimes thought that it is the business of the artist to better nature. The romanticists considered it their duty to understand nature, not to better her, not to improve upon her. It is true that all romanticism is based upon some sort of *desire*, whether earthly or transcendent; but it works itself out in its details from a foundation of reality, and it works itself up towards the discovery of the true or the real meaning of what has hitherto been un-understood in full or not understood at all. It bases itself, it builds itself, upon reality. However highly romantic the vision may be, the result always is something like this, that

> *Another* England there I saw,
> *Another* London with its tower,
> *Another* Thames and other hills,
> And *another* pleasant Surrey bower!

But it is these things with a difference. The philosophy of Locke and Hume had reduced all our experience to mere succession of sensations. The romanticists found in these sensations a suggestion of something more that lay behind sensation, behind time and place and circumstance. Often from the most ordinary experiences (and this was particularly true of Wordsworth and of Burns) the inlook into the deepest things could be found. Often places and things seemed to cry aloud that they have within them immemorial and unknown mysteries and meanings. Even in science, as well as in poetry, while every step away from mystery seems bright, clear, and immysterious, yet the end of it all is a deeper mystery. What is electricity? What is this life that has so long followed a process of "evolution"? What is mind? Whither are we tending? Science carries us to these questions, and then faces things as romantic as any poetic dreamer has ever faced.

In the last chapter, we defined romance as that kind of writing which represents the mysterious or marvelous in either real or fancied life.

Coleridge, Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats were romantic poets. No one questions that in some of their poems they were sovereign minstrels, too. There is no controversy about the magnetic melody, the splendid beauty of a goodly share of what Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats wrote in verse. There is difference of opinion about much that was written by Wordsworth, Scott, and Byron. In fact, we have some slight hesitation in including Scott among the great poets of the time, however unexcelled he may have been as a great romantic novelist. Some would have as much hesitation about Byron. But none but the unimaginative or he who seeks the highly sensational has doubt about Wordsworth when reading some of his poems. All of these men are great in the permanent effect they have created; some chiefly in the ever-renewed effect of the direct reading of their own works, others chiefly for the effect produced through other writers.

Coleridge. — We have spoken of the *Lyrical Ballads* published by Coleridge and Wordsworth in 1798. The *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* was among these. Four other great poems Coleridge wrote. One was a translation of *Wallenstein* from the German poet Schiller. The translation is a better poem than the original. The three other great poems were *Kubla Khan*, *Love*, and *Christabel*. These three and the *Ancient Mariner* are all dreams.

A word about the everywhere-known *Ancient Mariner*. Lowell has called attention to Coleridge's sense for the value of diction, or choice of words, when he chose *The Ancient Mariner* as a title, instead of "The Elderly Seaman," just as Wordsworth did when he chose as a title to one of his poems *Intimations of Immortality* instead of "Hints of Deathless-

ness." The romantic atmosphere of strangeness is at once gained by such a title. The materials of this poem of *The Ancient Mariner* are " eerie tales of the South Sea, old voyages, saints' legends, a dream of a skeleton ship, and the modern sentiment of animal sanctity." Along with all of this, Coleridge is a painter of wonderful scenery. But the subtle analyzer of the human soul, the penetrative seer into the psychology of the mind of man is at work here, also, because the leading thing in the poem is the passionate feeling and thought of the mariner himself. And, as we have suggested, all is built upon reality, as the " light of common day " in the last stanzas makes perfectly clear; and all is the outcome of desire for a certain attitude which the poet hopes human beings will take in their everyday life. Yet if the poetry of this era had a beginning in something " new," it was in the *Ancient Mariner*.

Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* is but a fragment. Professor Schelling has said that the reading of this poem is an infallible touchstone of lyrical appreciation. By that he means that one can determine whether he is a lover of lyrical poetry or not by the way in which he responds to the reading of this poem. Nothing in the English language surpasses the poem in imaginative phantasy or in the visionary character of its music. Wordsworth defined style as " the incarnation of thought." In *Kubla Khan* it is the perfect incarnation of vision. It would seem impossible more perfectly to blend substance and form than in this superb work of sheer imaginative power. The sound of the syllables, each by itself, is unforgettable:

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea . . .

The poem entitled *Love* is the least imaginative of the four, but it was more popular during Coleridge's life than the others. Its opening stanza is characteristic of the love poetry among the romanticists:

> All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
> Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
> All are but ministers of Love,
> And feed his sacred flame.

The Ballad of the Dark Ladie, which *Love* was intended to introduce, begins

> Beneath yon birch with silver bark
> And boughs so pendulous and fair,
> The brook falls scattered down the rock:
> And all is mossy there.
>
> And there upon the moss she sits,
> The Dark Ladie in silent pain:
> The heavy tear is in her eye,
> And drops and swells again.

The first of these two stanzas is nearly a perfect picture, though a little short of the foreground painting which Ruskin was so enthusiastic over in the last two of the following lines of Wordsworth's, —

> So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive; —
> Would that the little flowers were born to live
> Conscious of half the pleasure which they give,
> That to the mountain daisy's self were known
> *The beauty of its star-shaped shadow thrown*
> *On the smooth surface of the naked stone.*

Musical as Byron and Scott were, they failed when they tried to play the harp which brought forth the ethereal music of Coleridge's *Christabel*. There is little quarrel with the

acceptance of this poem as the masterpiece in musical verse. Like *Kubla Khan*, it is a fragment only. Coleridge did not possess the power to do a sustained piece of work, owing to his shattered constitution; but what there is in these two fragments is pure gold, though if there are degrees of purity, the highest must be granted to *Christabel*. All unpleasant *things* are excluded from *Christabel*, though the *atmosphere* of mental uncertainty and foreboding is all-pervasive and powerful. It is useless to try to get the true music of such a poem by reading it aloud, but no other poem sings itself so wonderfully to the inner ear as *Christabel*. In a preface to the edition of 1816, Coleridge said of this poem, " In my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the loveliness, of a vision; I trust that I shall be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come . . . the metre of *Christabel* is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless, this occasional variation in the number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion."

Effect of the French Revolution. — The French Revolution at its beginning had a most appealing effect upon the literary men of England. We have already called attention to the sorrow of Cowper over the wrongs of men; nowhere, he found, were the poor, in particular, more downtrodden than in the France of the eighteenth century. Years before the fall of the Bastille, Cowper had denounced that terrible prison in these words:

Ye horrid towers, the abode of broken hearts;
Ye dungeons, and ye cages of despair,
That monarchs have supplied from age to age
With music such as suits their sovereign ears,
The sighs and groans of miserable men!
There's not an English heart that would not leap
To hear that ye were fallen at last.

Burns had been among the first heartily to greet the outbreak which brought about the downfall of the French monarchy. He had even illegally used his official position as exciseman, to send small cannon to the aid of the revolutionists.

Wordsworth later described his own feelings at that time thus, —

For, lo, the dread Bastille
With all the chambers in its horrid towers,
Fell to the ground; by violence overthrown
Of indignation, and with shouts that drowned
The crash it made in falling. From the wreck
A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,
The appointed seat of equitable law
And mild paternal sway.

Coleridge and Southey, too, were intensely enthusiastic in support of the great revolutionary movement. Byron and Shelley were too young to realize the meaning of the Revolution at the time it was going on, Byron having been born in 1788 and Shelley in 1792; but the revolutionary spirit survived in them after the reaction against what Tennyson later called the "red fool-fury of the Seine" had strongly set in.

The reaction showed itself, as we have already pointed out, with terrible strength in the man who, Augustine Birrell has said, "saw organized society steadily, and saw it whole," — Edmund Burke. Coleridge, too, changed his mind about the

DOVE COTTAGE, GRASMERE, WORDSWORTH'S HOME

Revolution. In his *France: an Ode*, the poet described his own attitude in 1792 and 1793, —

> When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
> And with that oath, which smote air, earth, and sea,
> Stamped her strong foot and said she would be free,
> Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared!

But when French armies crushed Switzerland and annexed Geneva to France, Coleridge in 1797 felt that true liberty had been forgotten:

> O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
> And patriot only in pernicious toils,
> Are these thy boasts, Champion of humankind?
> To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
> Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey;
> To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
> From freemen torn; to tempt and to betray?

Wordsworth. — Wordsworth, like Coleridge, and Southey, too, had also hoped much from the Revolution, but had been disappointed when the Republic of France was transformed into a military despotism. The reaction in Wordsworth and Southey was strongest at the time when Spain rose against the tyranny of Napoleon. Landor also joined them in the reaction; he even equipped at his own expense a thousand soldiers and led them against the French foe. Wordsworth's revolt against the French excesses was more profound than that of either Coleridge or Southey or Landor, as his nature was more deep. Contrary to the general opinion of those who read little or none of Wordsworth but those poems of his in which the solacing power of nature is reported and interpreted, Wordsworth was a man of very turbulent spirit. In youth he was violent and moody; in early manhood, as Professor Dowden says,

" he was stern, bold, worn by exhausting ardors." De Quincey said that " the secret fire of a temperament too fervid " made him look older than he was. One needs to read all his poems to appreciate what a full-rounded man he was. " Senses, intellect, emotions, imagination, conscience, will, were all of unusual vigor; but each helped the other, each controlled the other, each was to the other an impulse and a law." It was the " massive harmony " of all these powers which, after all, made him, instead of an eccentric man, the equable man that he was. The great *Poems Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty* must supplement the nature poems, if one would know Wordsworth fully. It is easy to ridicule *We are Seven* and *Alice Fell* and other verses, namby-pamby with sickly sentimentality as many find them, but to arraign their author for such verses, as if he had written nothing else, reacts upon the critic, for it is evident that the critic is then far from following the golden rule of the scholar, " Never quote a book which you have not read from cover to cover." Among Wordsworth's political poems we find such lines as these, referring to Toussaint L'Ouverture, —

> Thou hast left behind
> Powers that will work for thee: air, earth, and skies;
> There's not a breathing of the common wind
> That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;
> Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
> And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

And these, —

> Now our life is only drest
> For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
> Or groom! — We must run glittering like a brook
> In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
> The wealthiest man among us is the best:
> No grandeur now in nature or in book

Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone! our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

And these, —

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, 'with pomp of waters, unwithstood,'
Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary hands,
That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
Should perish; and to evil and to good
Be lost forever. In our halls is hung
Armory of the invincible Knights of old:
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held. — In everything we are sprung
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

Wordsworth was one of the few choice spirits of earth who rebelled against the convenient doctrine of conducting life according to the principle of expediency. To him there was but one "supreme expediency," — JUSTICE. A great deal more than Coleridge did, he followed the latter's principle of referring facts to the mightiness of his own inner nature, in "opposition to those forces which men can see with their eyes and reduce to figures upon a slate."

There are few great sonneteers amid the poets of any nation. England has her full share: Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Keats, Mrs. Browning, the two Rossettis, — some would add Swinburne. We have quoted above from some of

the political sonnets of Wordsworth. The sonnet beginning "The World is too much with us" is better known than any other of Wordsworth's.

To write a sonnet is no easy task, for its structure of fourteen lines, its relatively fixed rhyme scheme, its division into two parts, one of eight lines, the other of six lines, with their subdivisions into four lines and three lines, its content of general statement, elaboration into details, the turning about of thought to view it at another angle, the application or summing up of all, — these things require thinking and care, however forceful the passion of thought and emotion may be. *Upon Westminster Bridge* is a wonderfully magnificent picture, especially to those who know London.

> Earth has not anything to show more fair;
> Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
> A sight so touching in its majesty:
> This City doth now like a garment wear
>
> The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
> Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
> Open unto the fields, and to the sky, —
> All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
>
> Never did sun more beautifully steep
> In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
> Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
>
> The river glideth at his own sweet will:
> Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
> And all that mighty heart is lying still!

The sonnet as a type of lyric poetry was well suited to the balanced, contemplative spirit of Wordsworth. He loved to ponder, and to discipline his intellectual and emotional ideas. The sonnet hardly permits of strains of "unpremeditated art"; and Wordsworth's sonnet *To a Sky-Lark*, beautiful as it is,

lacks the spontaneity of Shelley's longer lyric to the same ethereal minstrel. Wordsworth wrote his praise of this pilgrim of the sky in both a fourteen and an eighteen-line poem, — the latter an unusual variation from what it is the custom to call a sonnet, but this illustrates the freedom from convention which the man who loved discipline so much was willing, nevertheless, to take.

Of all Wordsworth's hundreds of poems the greatest are the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* and the *Lines Composed above Tintern Abbey*, the *Ode* being the superior of the two. Close to these in greatness come *The Affliction of Margaret*, *The Daffodils*, some of the political sonnets, and passages here and there in *The Excursion* and *The Prelude*. The work of Wordsworth was too multitudinous to permit more than the merest suggestions concerning it here. One will not read far in his work, it may be remarked, without concluding that the interpretation of romanticism which makes it a convertible term with medievalism is nothing short of absurd. It is his love of nature, and his belief that nature and man are akin, that nature has power to subdue and to solace passionate and suffering man, which have given Wordsworth his influence upon poets and readers who are not poets. This attitude to nature is the universally recognized thing about him. Matthew Arnold has made most of this aspect of Wordsworth's work. Among many other things he said about Wordsworth is the following, —

> Time may restore us in his course
> Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;
> But where will Europe's latter hour
> Again find Wordsworth's healing power?

"Wordsworth," says Stopford Brooke, "conceived that nature was alive. It had, he imagined, one living soul which,

entering into flower, stream, or mountain, gave them each a soul of their own. Between this Spirit in nature and the mind of man there was a pre-arranged harmony which enabled nature to communicate its own thought to man, and man to reflect upon them, until an absolute union between them was established." *Effect of Natural Objects*, *Stepping Westward*, *Stray Pleasures*, *Brougham Castle*, and *Resolution and Independence* are among the large number of poems that help to give an idea of the poet's attitude to nature. Wordsworth had also much of the affection for animals and children which Coleridge and Blake had. *The White Doe of Rylstone* and many passages in *The Prelude* make this more finely evident than some more frequently read, but more trivial poems. Of course, *The Solitary Reaper* and *She was a Phantom of Delight* should be given due praise, for from them thousands have found the glow and glory which does really fill the common life of all of us, if we have but eyes to see. No other English poet has had such full and true sympathy, such strong feeling for nature, as had Wordsworth.

> To me the meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears

meant to Wordsworth precisely what it said. And so, also, the little poem beginning "She dwelt among the untrodden ways," — it meant what it said, to a profoundly thinking as well as feeling man, as much as did his *Ode to Duty*.

Scott. — The Wizard of the North was the appropriate name which was given to Sir Walter Scott. Walter Scott was brought up upon legends and stories and poetic background of all sorts, out of which stands prominently Percy's *Reliques*, which was a sort of Bible to the writers of the Romantic "revival." He had, however, the careful training which preparation for the

SIR WALTER SCOTT

profession of law gives. He was also an inveterate reader of history. That he successfully translated *Goetz von Berlichingen* from the German of Goethe is evidence that he was a good linguist. He also translated Bürger's *Lenore*. Furthermore, he gave a goodly amount of time and indefatigable energy to collecting material for a book called *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, which had as much, or nearly as much, effect on later poetry as Percy's *Reliques*. All this was preparing him for his long narrative poems, and for his novels.

We have suggested that there may be some hesitation as to the correctness of including Sir Walter among the great poets of this period. He himself thought, when Byron became famous, that there was no further use in his attempting to court popularity by the writing of poetry; and it was undoubtedly true that when Coleridge and Wordsworth attained popularity, late in Wordsworth's life, and when Tennyson became the vogue, Scott's power over the masses who read poetry waned very perceptibly. Yet in his own day, from the publication of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* until 1832, the year of his death, he was the man of the hour with the reading public. And even yet, though Germany, France, and even America do not read him with the unshaken loyalty with which he was first received abroad, in Great Britain he is supremely loved. It is good that he should be, for in him there was nothing unclean, cheap, low, or morbid. If the above-mentioned poem and *The Lady of the Lake* have lost something of their former enormous popularity, it has been more because Scott's own novels, *Waverley* and the rest, have given the English reading public more of the same thing in a form they like better than the poetic form. *Rokeby* and *The Lord of the Isles* suffered also because they were overshadowed, not so much by the novels, as by *The Lay* and *The Lady*. *Marmion* was not very acceptable to the critics

when it appeared, but it was popular with the public. Readers outside of Great Britain have agreed with the critics of Scott's time, and have not found *Marmion* so good as the two dazzling successes, *The Lay* and *The Lady*. *The Vision of Don Roderick* was Scott's message against Napoleonic domination, just as was Southey's epic poem, *Roderick, the Last of the Goths*, and Landor's *Count Julian*, but it was inferior to them. Scott had not had the military experience in the Iberian Peninsula which Landor secured; nor had he gone delving deep into the archives of Spain as Southey did. *The Bridal of Triermain* also was not especially successful.

But there is no question of the unlimited interest which *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* aroused and the craving for romantic sensation which it has helped to appease. It is as good in its own way as Coleridge's *Christabel* (to which it owes much) is in its way. But the way of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* is the way of the effective dramatic story, while that of *Christabel* is twofold, that of picture and of music. The traditional marvel with which *The Lay* is concerned is a fountain of perpetual delight. There was much of music, too, in this poem of Sir Walter's, though the songs in *The Lady of the Lake* are better known, partly because *The Lady* is so much employed as a poem for study in the schools. This poem of the Scottish Highlands extended general interest both in beauty of landscape and in type of character. It has put upon the map, in the minds of men, a new geographical entity, The Scott Country.

Scott, as was most natural, inspired a host of imitators. But nothing has taken the place of *The Lady of the Lake* and *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* in the affections of those who love romantic story in easy-to-read verse.

Romantic features, once more. — Wordsworth better than any other poet represented that aspect of the romantic movement which showed itself in a turning to nature. Coleridge best represented that aspect of it which has been called the "renaissance of wonder." All through the eighteenth century, there had been some turning to nature for comfort and solace and guidance, but none such as led Wordsworth to assert that

> One impulse from the vernal wood
> Can teach us more of man,
> Of moral evil and of good,
> Than all the sages can.

There had been much attempting to secure "creepy" effects by such crude mechanical horrors as Horace Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe were skilled in, but only Coleridge succeeded in making of the supernatural such a literary force as it had been in the hands of ancient Greeks and Hebrews. Sir Walter made of the supernatural something only charming, not something consoling or powerfully moving as did Wordsworth and Coleridge. Wordsworth and Coleridge, and Southey and Scott, and Landor, too, had been greatly aroused by the human cataclysm known as the French Revolution; but all of them reacted so strongly against the tyranny which followed it, that they were looked upon at the time, especially Wordsworth, as renegades to the cause of Liberty.

Two more great poets, Byron and Shelley, and one minor one, Tom Moore, were unshaken in their revolutionary fervor, Tom Moore partly because it gave him the opportunity for much humorous writing; therefore, he may have been partly insincere. Byron certainly was often insincere, though not so much in his support of what was revolutionary as in his attacks upon what was ultra-conservative. Shelley had all the sin-

cerity which man is capable of. Keats was the only one of the great romantic poets who was not interested in political movements.

One who finds humor in even serious situations will be delighted with reading Tom Moore's *The Fudge Family in Paris*. Mr. Fudge undertakes to write an account of his touring in France, and expects in it to prove

> that all the world, at present,
> Is in a state extremely pleasant;
> That Europe — thanks to royal swords
> And bay'nets, and the Duke's commanding,
> Enjoys a peace — which, like the Lord's,
> Passeth all human understanding.

Byron. — George Gordon Byron was, in almost all things, "a house divided against itself." Even in the theory and practice of poetic writing he desperately wanted to think and do as Dryden and Pope had done, but it was impossible for him to keep from overflowing with the romantic ideas and feelings with which his being was crowded full.

He first wrote, in 1807, a group of pieces published as *Hours of Idleness*. This book was one of fluent verses, though with but little of personal stamp upon them. The book was attacked vigorously, perhaps excessively, in the *Edinburgh Review*. The attack served to arouse in Byron all the anger there was in him, and, although he was still an undergraduate student at Cambridge University, there came forth a retort upon the reviewer that made Byron thenceforth a force which must be reckoned with. He entitled his retort *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. There was much of foolish satire in this reply, but all was so well put that the sting of it remained where it was thrust. The invective is worthy of being ranked with the literary satires by those whom Byron longed to

follow as his masters, Dryden and Pope. It was a sort of turning upside down, though, of Pope's *Dunciad*, for in it Byron struck with his malice the great master-poets of the day, while Pope had lashed only the little fellows. Rogers and Campbell alone had no gibes cast at them by the young satirist, for they were trying to keep alive the manner and spirit of Pope, which Byron so much admired.

Byron's first really good poetry consisted of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*, published in 1812. These, and the succeeding cantos published later, caught the public fancy immediately. There was no such thing in that day as descriptive journalism, and *Childe Harold* did for the reading public precisely what the traveling correspondent does to-day. Furthermore, Byron was adroit enough to take his readers through the countries and over the very ground many of them had been traversing during the Napoleonic wars. The wars could be all lived over again as these fascinating descriptions were perused, and the wars which were still in progress could be followed with more precision and keener interest because of the picturesque background which the poet was furnishing. Description was Byron's forte. Macaulay in his essay on Byron says of his manner that it " is almost unequaled; rapid, sketchy, full of vigor; the selection happy; the strokes few and bold." This is the successful journalistic manner. Macaulay thinks that in this Byron was superior to Wordsworth, at least in the effect of attracting multitudes of readers. He adds, " In spite of the reverence which we feel for the genius of Mr. Wordsworth we cannot but think that the minuteness of his descriptions often diminishes their effect." He says, further, that Byron's " descriptions, great as was their intrinsic merit, derived their principal interest from the feeling which always mingled with them. He was himself the beginning,

the middle, the end, of all his own poetry, the hero of every tale, the chief object in every landscape."

Then came the second group of productions. Among others in this group were the *Giaour*, the *Bride of Abydos*, the *Corsair*, and *Lara*. Here the author challenged comparison with Scott, but *oriental* love and battle took the place of love and battle in the Scottish border chivalry. Byron's descriptions were more intense than Scott's, but they failed to picture any part of society except that with which the hero himself was concerned. They are not epic, then, in the sense that Scott's poems were epic, for they did not spring from the life of the people.

Then followed the third canto of *Childe Harold*. Byron had now exiled himself from England, because of the hostility of English society to his manner of living. He was in a temper of storm and stress. The most splendid of his phrases and the swiftest moving music in his verse here appear, though there is no such subtle cadence nor any such exquisite melody as in the verse of Coleridge or of Shelley. *The Prisoner of Chillon* was also produced at about this time, 1816.

Byron soon came under the influence of Goethe's *Faust*, and the drama called *Manfred* was the outcome. Byron himself asserted that it was the Jungfrau, with its sublime solitudes, that, more than Faust, had influenced the writing of *Manfred*. Byron desired that *Manfred*, and *Cain*, a later dramatic poem, should be thought of as "mysteries" rather than dramas. They were intended to have a spiritual meaning, such as the old mystery was intended to have. In *Manfred* Byron desired to teach that the tree of Knowledge was something different from the tree of Life. Knowledge could not satisfy a guilty conscience. Byron seems to most readers to have been posing in this dramatic poem, just as he was at the outset of his career when, with the characteristic aplomb of the college student, he entitled his

undergraduate effort *Hours of Idleness*. In modern parlance, he was "bluffing."

The next phase of Byron's work came in Venice, whither he had removed from Switzerland. A visit to Rome, the great spectacular city sitting amid the ruins of its ancient glories, inspired Byron to the extending of his empire over the minds of men in another direction from any thus far taken, and the magnificent fourth canto of *Childe Harold* now opened up human aspects of ancient art in such manner as most of his readers had never imagined possible.

This effort in the name of art was almost immediately followed by *Beppo*. Facile wit and abundant gayety found its way to the surface, a vein surely as welcome as that of his morbid and passionate declaiming. So much welcomed was *Beppo* that an extended satiric epic was at once planned by Byron and called *Don Juan*, four cantos of which appeared between September, 1818 and November, 1819. Upon this poem Byron worked intermittently for three years. All of his revolutionary sentiments poured their currents into this satire; all his desire to overthrow government as it is, social order and convention as they are, religion as it is. He conceived a vicious and unprincipled character in Don Juan, and then led him through the ranks of society in which accomplishments of mind and of manner count for everything, and showed what ills befall such a character when it comes into touch with all the conventionalism of society. The established order in Italy, England, and Germany, Byron attacked most of all. But his opinions were too radical for his time, and still are for any order of society which is not given over to a sort of free and unthinking vulgarity. However much Byron played the cynic, though, he was always energetic, and his directness told upon those for whom it was intended.

Finally, came a brief period and a group of poems of which the *Vision of Judgment* and *Cain* are most worthy of praise. The first of these two was an arraignment of the incompetent king, George III, and is most interesting reading for the student of his period. The second was the most thoughtful of all of Byron's works. It was an examination of the world-old problem of the origin of evil and its final effects. It is hardly so magnificent in poetry as *Manfred*, but it is more profound in thought.

Byron died fighting for Greek freedom, in 1824. He was trying to redeem also, we think, the life which he had lived so much apart from all moral restraint. Macaulay wrote of him as "the most celebrated Englishman of the nineteenth century." But Macaulay was only twenty-four years old when Byron died, and was not much older when he wrote that statement for the *Edinburgh Review*. Yet this opinion was held by Goethe and by Victor Hugo. They, too, however, were Byron's contemporaries, and the judgment of even the next generation went against them. Tennyson and Arnold soon taught readers of poetry to demand the high seriousness which Byron lacked. Lack of earnestness, of sincerity, and bad workmanship both in general plan and in detail, even in grammar, have told heavily against Byron as a poet. His own lines in *Manfred* best sum up the man himself:

> This should have been a noble creature: he
> Hath all the energy which would have made
> A goodly frame of glorious elements,
> Had they been wisely mingled; as it is
> It is an awful chaos — light and darkness,
> And mind and dust, and passions and pure thoughts
> Mix'd and contending without end or order.

Shelley. — While Wordsworth and Scott were upholding the traditions of the ancient order of society, and while Byron was

in open and bold and purposely destructive revolt against those traditions, Percy Bysshe Shelley took a sort of middle ground between the lovers of old things and the one who would destroy the old. Shelley was every whit as unconquerably unconventional as Byron. "All human law and discipline," says Samuel R. Gardiner, the historian, "seemed to him to be the mere invention of tyrants, by which the instinctive craving of the soul for beauty of form and nobility of life was repressed." And yet this rebel against society as it was had the greatest eagerness of soul, a very passionate ecstasy of desire for the building up of an order of society that would help the world to be beautiful and to be good. Shelley hoped for an impossibly good and beautiful world and prophesied that it would come. And yet he was far more sensible than the reformers and the revolutionists nearly always are. For, though his ideal for men was that they should be

> Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
> Exempt from awe, worship, and degree,

yet he expected this to be only in the far-distant future. "The great thing," he said, "is to hold the balance between popular impatience and tyrannical obstinacy . . . I am one of those whom nothing will satisfy, but who are ready to be partially satisfied in all that is practicable." It is such beliefs that are overlooked by many of Shelley's worshipers, as well as by his adverse critics, and therefore they both misunderstand him.

Like Edmund Spenser, Shelley was almost pure poet. He was the most completely lyrical of all English poets. From his own heart welled up all he wrote, and it all came refined through suffering that was deeply felt. He wrote that poets

> Are cradled into poetry by wrong,
> They learn in suffering what they teach in song.

Swift and fair were his creations. All were done and his life over before his thirtieth year was completed. He said of himself that his life was so crowded with striking and varied experience that he ought to be thought of along with men ninety years of age. Unlike most great poets, he did his work hastily, and, therefore, it has inequalities in style. His longer works lack the perfection which his shorter pieces attain. It is in a general way true that the briefer the poem he wrote the finer it is. Saintsbury thinks that the *Lament* beginning "O world! O life! O time!" consisting of but ten lines, is the most perfect thing of its kind that all poetry contains.

Perhaps no man has ever been attended by more splendid visions, excepting, it may be, the ancient Hebrew prophets, Isaiah and Ezekiel and Hosea. Yet this was the man who in his school days spent his leisure in translating Pliny from the Latin, in reading, with great eagerness, Locke, Hume, and the French materialistic essayists, in writing two unreadable novels, and (somewhat like Wordsworth, who was intensely interested in mathematics) in constantly experimenting with chemicals. "His hands and clothes," says Miss Shelley, "were constantly stained and corroded with acids, and it only seemed too probable that some day the house would be burned down, or some serious mischief happen to himself or others from the explosion of combustibles."

No poet was ever original in any more accurate sense than Shelley was, for every form of verse that came from his pen was filled with the soul of its writer. And at times there is some newness in the form of the verse itself. Coleridge was the pioneer who made it possible for those who followed him to write in forms that varied from the traditions of the past. Yet the originality of Shelley in musical forms rests in this, — that he went nearly always a little "beyond" what had been done

before. Successful originality lies not in eccentric departures, but in new building upon what foundation has already been laid. So it is that when we speak of Shelley as owing something now to this man and then to that, we mean that he began, as the wise will, with what others have achieved. In his early work Landor, Southey, and Godwin first influenced him, then Wordsworth, then Peacock, and finally Spenser.

His first poem of worth was *Queen Mab*, printed, though without his consent, when its author was but eighteen years of age, in 1812. The oriental atmosphere and form of the poem were partly suggested by the work of Landor, and, even more, of Southey. The poem is a strong invective against wealth, militarism, and superstition. Even the thought of *Queen Mab* is not original, except in the passion with which it flames. The view of human life is absorbed from Shelley's father-in-law, William Godwin, the novelist and political and economic philosopher. Second came *Alastor*, three years later than *Queen Mab*. In *Alastor* may be traced the influence of Wordsworth. Yet while it is a turning to nature for companionship and aid, "nature" as Shelley thought of it is not very like the quiet and solemn environment of the Westmoreland Lakes. It is a nature of loveliness, and occasionally of horror that is not of the earth. Not from the spirit which informs all nature does Shelley expect to learn the secrets of existence, as Wordsworth does, but from "the lips of some lone ghost." Shelley's imagination had not yet reached the organizing level of Wordsworth's, but was given over to detail. He had not yet learned to look with the eye of the truly great, Goethe and Wordsworth, upon nature as the garment of God.

Another influence to come into Shelley's work was that of the Greek spirit, more particularly of Plato, under the stimulus of Thomas Love Peacock, who for this, if not for his own in-

imitable work, should be ever esteemed. The immediate result was Shelley's *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* and *Mont Blanc*. If the poet had written nothing else, these would have won him an immortal name.

Edmund Spenser was still another element of influence which entered into his work. The *Revolt of Islam* was written in Spenserian or nine-lined stanzas, and the majestic Britomart of the *Faerie Queen* gave many suggestions for the heroine of Shelley's wild romance. Wildly romantic in details as the *Revolt of Islam* is, nevertheless it was a dazzling story of the kindling of a nation to freedom at the call of a poet-prophet, and a brilliant celebration of love as the sole law which should govern the moral world. It is not a great poem, but is the work of a poet on the way to greatness.

Shelley's *Lines on the Euganean Hills*, *Prometheus Unbound*, *The Cenci*, *The Cloud*, *The Sensitive Plant*, *To a Skylark*, *Ode to the West Wind*, *A Lament*, *Recollection*, *Adonais*, *Epipsychidion*, and *The Triumph of Life* were written after Shelley left England in 1818, like Byron never to return.

The *Lines on the Euganean Hills* is worthy the distinction of grouping apart from the others, for there is no other poem produced by him before or after so excellent for realistic description. Shelley's descriptions are *usually* in terms of Ideal Beauty, but here we have something new, for him, because realistic. Few, almost no other, of his landscapes in verse have "so much of local and imaginative veracity as that Venetian sunrise (in these *Lines*) with the domes and towers rising like obelisks in a glowing furnace, and the rooks soaring along the dewy mists, their purple feathers starred with gold."

Prometheus Unbound and *The Cenci* were written in Rome during 1819. These poems are dramatic in form. Shelley's Prometheus is an ideal reformer, one not merely defiant but

interpenetrated with the spirit of love. Goethe had written of Prometheus as typical of man's shaping intellect, Byron had written of him as a symbol of man's heroic endurance, but Shelley's earth-born Titan united both these qualities and added, as we have said, those of defiance and of love, — another illustration of this poet's independence and originality. Shelley was a true artist, never touching anything he did not better and make more great. Prometheus, to him, is the ideal mind and spirit of man as they were made to be. The characters in this drama are too colossal in their qualities to permit of acting on the stage. The poem contains, without qualification, some of the finest lyrical lines that have ever been written. Most of these wondrous lyral bursts are uttered by Asia, the Spirit of Love itself, the lamp of the world, the "very life of life." Perhaps the lines beginning and those ending the second act are sufficient to mention as illustrative of this fine lyricism; but the description of the Earth near the close of the fourth act, spoken by the character representing the Moon, should also be read. There is no other music precisely like these harmonious strains. For imaginative power, as applied to nature, the following may be quoted from some of Asia's lines in the second act, if only for the sake of the last one:

> Methought among the lawns together
> We wandered, underneath the young gray dawn,
> And multitudes of dense white fleecy clouds
> Were wandering in thick flocks along the mountains
> *Shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind.*

The Cenci, its author hoped, would be successful upon the stage; but it was not, chiefly because it is too purely poetic. Yet John Addington Symonds, one of the biographers of Shelley, calls it "the greatest tragedy composed in English since the death of Shakespeare."

While Shelley was residing at Pisa and at Lerici in Italy, he wrote *The Cloud*, *To a Skylark*, *Ode to the West Wind*, *Adonais*, *Epipsychidion*, and various other lyrics, and *The Triumph of Life*. Some think Shelley's finest work to be in his briefer lyrics, such as *The Cloud* and *To a Skylark*. Undoubtedly they are singularly beautiful, and will be forever popular. But, as products of the imaginative intellect, they do not stand comparison with such unworldly marvels as *Prometheus Unbound*, *Adonais*, and *Epipsychidion*. All critical opinion agrees to-day that the first named of these three shows the highest qualities of the greatest lyric poetry of the world. The *Adonais* is a lament for Keats, who had died in 1821. This poem claims that genius has the power of transcending death, — a claim that Keats lives, that Death is dead, not Keats, that Keats has become one with Nature:

> He is made one with Nature: there is heard
> His voice in all her music, from the moan
> Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;
> He is a presence to be felt and known
> In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
> Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
> Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
> Which wields the world with never wearied love,
> Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.
>
> He is a portion of the loveliness
> Which once he made more lovely.

The tone of the great elegy of *Adonais* may be suggested by the forty-fifth stanza:

> The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
> Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought;
> Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
> Rose pale, his solemn agony had not

Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved:
Oblivion, as they rose, shrank like a thing reproved.

It was Plato and Dante who, above all others, influenced Shelley in *Epipsychidion.* But Shelley put new lights into all old lanterns that he used, as well as many old lights into new lanterns. In his *Epipsychidion* is an even and sustained beauty of form, and a passionate expression of that love which is both love and friendship. Shelley himself said of it, "It is an idealized history of my life and feelings." In this poem he speaks of Emilia Viviani as

Seraph of Heaven! too gentle to be human;
Veiling beneath that radiant form of Woman
All that is unsupportable in thee
Of light, and love, and immortality.

Again, he says

True love in this differs from gold and clay,
That to divide is not to take away.
Love is like understanding, that grows bright,
Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy light,
Imagination! . . .

The poem is replete with what Shelley calls "flowers of thought," shining with the most rapturous of sensitive beauty.

Shelley's last summer days were occupied with writing *The Triumph of Life.* He was drowned in the Spezzian bay before the work was finished. Strangely enough, this poem ends with the unanswered question, "Then, what is life? I cried."

Shelley was an immeasurable genius. His verse is the most nearly perfect illustration of the definition that "poetry is love talking musically."

Keats. — No better introduction to the poetry of John Keats could be written than this description, by Shelley, — in his essay entitled *A Defence of Poetry*, — "Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds." For John Keats, though suffering from what was in his day thought to be an incurable disease, tuberculosis, and dying from it at the age of twenty-four, possessed one of the happiest and best minds that have ever blessed this fair earth. One who sentimentally weeps over Keats as a languishing, consumptive martyr, too sensitive to endure the criticism of even a magazine reviewer, should read the essay on *Keats* by James Russell Lowell. He is likely to be brought up-standing at once by the statement, positively correct, that Keats "was a youth of energy and purpose."

Keats was born in 1795, the son of a livery-stable keeper, but one who was well-to-do. The boy was sent to a private school, and, when fifteen years of age, was apprenticed to a surgeon. He received what was, for his day, a good medical training and even practiced his profession until 1817, at which time his passion for literature led him to abandon every pursuit except the production of poetry. These brief facts of his life should be known, to correct the widespread misconception concerning his youth. He died in Italy in 1821, so that his productive period was but four years, from 1817 to 1821, — lamentably brief. He spoke of his name as "writ in water." "Posterity has agreed with him that it is — but in the Water of Life."[1]

Keats said, "There are three things to rejoice in in this age." Those three were Hazlitt, Wordsworth's *Excursion*, and the pictures of Benjamin Robert Haydon. It was the broad and generous culture, and the depth of taste of Hazlitt that attracted

[1] Saintsbury, *A History of Nineteenth Century Literature*, p. 87.

Keats. It was the strong individuality, the reflection of the personal moods of his own nature, the power of intimate observation reflected in Wordsworth's poetry, that made him seem so worthy to be admired. It was Haydon's intense enthusiasm for ancient Greek sculpture that led Keats to deep interest in things antique, and particularly in the beauty of ancient sculpture. Keats was almost too young to succeed in passing beyond his masters. Leigh Hunt was, however, even more of a master to Keats than the three whom Keats named; and rather an unfortunate mastery that of Hunt was, for the overdaintiness and luxuriousness of his fancy was so pleasing to Keats that a large share of Keats's own verse is too heavily laden with the same qualities. Yet Hunt had begun to use the old heroic couplet verse in a free rhythm, supple in movement, lithe and lilting in such way as the eighteenth-century hinged and jointed heroic couplet could never be. Keats imitated Hunt in this, but passed far beyond him in the free modulation which he was able to give to the couplet. There is no grace in even Pope's couplet like that in the following from the beginning of Keats's *Endymion:*

> A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
> Its loveliness increases; it will never
> Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
> A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
> Full of sweet dreams, of health, and quiet breathing.

And yet, popular as these lines are, they are by no means to be thought of as among Keats's best. His poetry, even though it does reveal many traces of the work of others, was epoch-making, for from his time on it was possible for a poet to wed music and meaning without meeting the frown of any one who was critical. In fact, it may be said that Keats more than any other poet of the era created the taste for rich melody in verse.

However strongly Keats was under the spell of this or that old and much-used subject matter, there is much that is new and unexpected in his work. It is acknowledged that his influence upon writers since his death has been incomparably greater than all influences of the past upon him, though it has been in matters of form, not in ideas, that he has reappeared to a great extent in those who have followed him. "Wordsworth has influenced most the ideas of succeeding poets, Keats their forms," said Lowell. A seventeenth-century writer once defined poetry as "the dreams of them that are awake." Keats was as much a dreamer as Coleridge, but the work of Keats, unlike that of Coleridge, could never have been done by one who was not thoroughly conscious of every step taken in its doing. A discriminating criticism of Keats was this made by Lowell, that Keats was over-languaged, but, the critic added, in that was implied the possibility of falling back to the perfect mean of diction. "It is only by the rich that the costly plainness, which at once satisfies the taste and the imagination, is attainable."

Keats never in his short career quite fully passed beyond the influence of Leigh Hunt and others like him, in their familiar, rather over-sentimental way of looking at and handling poetic things, but that influence is easily seen only in the first volume of his poems, published in 1817. There were thirty poems in that first volume, eighteen of them being sonnets, of which the most famous is the one entitled *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, quoted in this book on page 56. These poems show at once the fact that the poet looked at nature in detail, and that each exquisite detail was to him as if it had just been seen for the first time. There is more of mere prettiness in the poem, without title, beginning "I stood tip-toe upon a little hill," than in any other one of these early effusions:

A little noiseless noise among the leaves,
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves.

Here are sweet peas, on tip-toe for a flight;
With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,
And taper fingers catching at all things,
To bind them all about with tiny rings.
Were I in such a place, I sure should pray
That nought less sweet, might call my thoughts away,
Than the soft rustle of a maiden's gown
Fanning away the dandelion's down;
Than the light music of her nimble toes
Patting against the sorrel as she goes.

How she would start, and blush, thus to be caught
Playing in all her innocence of thought.

Second, came *Endymion*. Wordsworth called it "a pretty piece of paganism." And so it is. Here the imaginative wealth of the mind of Keats began to reveal itself, and a sort of "faery voyage after beauty" is the result. Still this poem is not the languishing thing that such a description might suggest. The subject is Greek; and surely the Greeks were virile enough. And, too, the rich red English blood can be traced through the old Greek veins which form the texture of the poem. The sensations described are such as one would feel on English soil. There is even a little psychology in the poem of *Endymion*, though it is put in language that is far from analytical; as, for instance,

How sickening, how dark the dreadful leisure
Of weary days, made deeper exquisite
By a foreknowledge of unslumbrous night!

We still see the somewhat falsely distorted writing and thinking of the school of Hunt surviving in these lines.

In April, 1818, Keats wrote in one of his letters, "I have

been hovering for some time between an exquisite sense of the luxurious and a love of philosophy." And again, "I find there is no worthy pursuit but the idea of doing some good to the world." The poet, now, is beginning to realize that besides the passion for beauty there is, as something of worth, the desire to think and to do. In June of that year he finished his poem entitled *Isabella; or The Pot of Basil*, which has inspired more than one eminent painter to superb brush work; in this poem Keats at least inspired others to do, and the production of the poem itself was also a deed of note. "Poetry must surprise by a fine excess," said Keats. It does in *Isabella*. There is still too much, as in the earlier poems, of material with sense appeal alone; for, while the poem is intended to tell a story, the action is embarrassed by the richness of description. It is not Greek veins now so much as medieval veins that Keats is flushing with blood of the English heart, as stanzas XXXV and XLI especially disclose, and even more especially stanza XXXIX. In this poem perfection of form is much more conspicuous than in the *Endymion* and the poems of 1817.

In the preface to *Endymion*, Keats had said that he wished once again after that poem to touch upon the mythology of Greece before he should bid it farewell. This wish found fulfillment in *Hyperion*, which he began to write in August, 1818, after four months of tramping in the Scotch Highlands. Keats was now strongly under the spell of Milton, a very different spell from that exercised by Leigh Hunt. He strove in *Hyperion* to emulate the majesty of the style of *Paradise Lost*. Had he lived longer and worked for years upon this poem, finishing the ten books projected, instead of breaking off in the middle of the third book, he might have mastered that style. Keats's attempt is one of the best of modern ones to handle the ancient myth of the struggle between the warring powers of heaven. He

pictures the struggle in which Jove overthrew Saturn. But with him the struggle is very modern, purely symbolistic of the subduing of the universe by beauty,

> for 'tis the eternal law
> That first in beauty should be first in might.

From *Hyperion* Keats turned aside, beginning in January, 1819, to write a small group of poems, and by the fall of that year completed *The Eve of St. Agnes*, *Lamia*, six odes, and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, — the last named and one of the odes, the *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, deserving to be thought of in a group by themselves because they are the two separate highest points to which his poetry rose. In *The Eve of St. Agnes* the author quite evidently has learned the art of story-telling. Here at last by him, unity of interest is attained in narrative. Few who seek for the permanent pleasure which exquisite poetry gives do not know the first three stanzas of this poem. Few there are who do not like often to think of the fifteenth stanza and " Madeline asleep in Lap of legends old," and the lovely twenty-fifth stanza, which is a tone-color poem almost by itself. Then, there is nowhere else to be found a catalogue of things which appeal to the physical taste, but which is so little filled with the grossness of mere palate tickling, as stanza XXX. In stanza XXXIII we have a hint of the *Belle Dame* which was to come. The richly and felicitously ornamented *Eve of St. Agnes* is in its simple romanticism the tribute to Keats's study of Chatterton, though it was the *Endymion* which he had dedicated to Chatterton. In one poem of this group, the *Ode to a Nightingale*, there are struck powerful musical tones to which the poet had not risen before, as

> Thou wast not born for death, Immortal Bird!
> No hungry generations tread thee down.

The ode *To Autumn* is an excellent corrective to Bryant's popular but over-melancholy poem on the same season. One who expects to read Alfred Noyes's *Tales of the Mermaid Inn* should not fail to precede that reading with Keats's *Lines on the Mermaid Tavern.*

In a separate group, as we have suggested, may well be placed the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci.* The first is the poet's reconstruction of the Greek belief that art's product is eternal, or that the most truthful, or the only truthful, of all things is beauty. In this poem there is ample evidence that we are still in the renaissance period (even though it is not technically so called), for no product of the fifteenth, sixteenth, or seventeenth century, in any country, more adequately approaches a real revival of the ancient culture and tone of spirit of old Greece. It is because Keats was the author of such a poem as this that one hundred years of poetry and criticism have paid homage to this youth as a master of those who write. Traces of another master, Wordsworth, may be found in this poem, which serves to demonstrate that the creative spirit is not confined to the work of any one man, but runs unbrokenly through them all. In *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* there is added to the old-time and rather childish romanticism of Chatterton, the mystic weirdness of Coleridge; yet nothing is more spontaneous than the wizardry of these perfect lines, these pictures impossible to any other medium of painting than poetry. To describe by refraining from description, to tell by refusing to tell, here reaches its highest altitude.

Only one more thing can be mentioned, his last verses, written in September, 1820, — his period of life was so short that the dates even by months are worth sacredly remembering. The sonnets of Keats are very uneven in quality, but the *last* one of all — without title — beginning "Bright star! would I

were steadfast as thou art . . . " is among the finest, among the best. The power to sing (no poet had better power than he at times), the instinct for consonance of sense with sound, imagination not bounded by time or measurable space, most human love, — these survive and find richly full expression in " Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou art . . . " and on until the last line, " And so live ever . . . or else swoon to death."

2. *The Great Novelists*

Jane Austen, realist. — Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott were the two great novelists of this period. Sir Walter was the romancer, the Wizard of the North; but Miss Austen was as wonderful in her way as he in his. Her way was that of the sincere and gifted realist, rendering ordinary life interesting because she saw its details clearly and then in a plain and simple manner told what she saw. She still stands as the greatest of women novelists, superior to George Eliot or Charlotte Brontë. She was entirely human, frankly and hopefully sympathetic. She showed a great simplicity in her work because she was deeply cultured. Her field was narrow, but she knew it thoroughly, and worked upon it " with the skill of the worker in ivory." Macaulay said of her, in his rather exaggerated way, that Shakespeare is the only writer with whom she can be compared. She undoubtedly seems to have possessed the faculty of knowing everything, as Shakespeare did, and to have had the skill to say exactly the thing that must be said. To most readers, Jane Austen *seems* thoroughly to have been what is called *objective;* that is, fully in control of herself and of the characters of whom she wrote, never obtruding her own sentiments or opinions regarding them. But she was not quite that, for her own satiric tone of thought pervaded everything she wrote. Yet we feel that she has adhered in

minutest detail to the truth of the daily life which she related. Her satire is never bitter, always pleasant, though seriously penetrating to the inner meaning of what she depicts; as the superficial, though equally exact realist, Richardson, had never been able to do, because he was blinded by sentiment.

Jane Austen's six books were written between 1796 and 1810, in the halcyon days of the poets Wordsworth and Coleridge, but were not published until between 1811 and 1818, thus overlapping the wonderful early days of Scott's success. Her books are: *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, and *Persuasion*. It is not the passing show of life that they picture, but ordinary life that is just as existent to-day as in her own day, one hundred years ago, and life that, in its main features, bids fair to continue endlessly. Therefore it seems that she is one who will always find an audience of readers. *Northanger Abbey* is her criticism of the Gothic romance, a very subtle, yet mild burlesque of its false heroicism. *Sense and Sensibility* is an indictment of the sentimentalists; and the sentimental character in her story is thoroughly cured of its sentimentalism in the end. *Pride and Prejudice* is the best and the most read of all the six. The comparison of it with a Shakespearean comedy is very fitting. Its humor is almost as keen, and it has all the technique of a finely constructed drama. In this book its author has illustrated the statement of Rodin, the present-day sculptor, that "All art is founded on mathematics; only, the artist must not let his mathematics grow cold." The book is as true in its details and as logical in its architectural contruction as a demonstration in geometry, yet Jane Austen herself cannot be separated from it.

Sir Walter Scott, romanticist. — Sir Walter Scott, the inspirer of Victor Hugo and Alexander Dumas in France, of Caballero in

ABBOTSFORD, SIR WALTER SCOTT'S HOME

Spain, of Fouqué in Germany, of Manzoni in Italy, and of Tolstoi in Russia, was forty-three years old when his first novel was completed. That first novel was *Waverley*. It came from the press in 1814. It was Scott's intention, when he began the Waverley novels, to write of his own day and country, like Henry Fielding, but he quickly gave up that intention and determined to entertain by writing tales of other times, and, soon, even of other lands, than his own. To do this was a hard task, for in the early nineteenth century there was little knowledge of history and less interest in it. This lack of knowledge and this lack of interest Scott had to break down, and he did so. He was able to do this because he was a great man, and because he wrote his great romantic heart right into his characters. He communicated his own life to them, though he was unable, as Jane Austen was able, to make all his characters vitally act. It was Sir Walter doing and speaking through most of his characters that attracted and held the reading world of a century ago, and does so still, in at least a third of his twenty-nine novels.

The twenty-nine novels easily fall into three groups, if we look at the subject matter from the point of view of a combination of time principle and geographic principle, for up to about 1819 Scott wrote chiefly (1) of Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, then (2) until about 1823 of England and the middle ages, when (3) in *Quentin Durward* he turned to the continent of Europe for subject matter. *Guy Mannering* and *The Antiquary* are considered by most critical readers to-day the best of the twenty-nine books, though many votes are cast for *Old Mortality*, *The Abbot*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and the ever popular *Ivanhoe*.

The first group of the novels includes *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *The Black Dwarf*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and *The*

Legend of Montrose. As is the usual fact, the greatest of this author's works came among the earlier ones. Having created his own public among readers, an author is expected to satisfy their hunger for more works of the same kind, but it is seldom that he can rise again to the heights to which he rose when he was writing to please himself rather than the public. *Waverley* continues to reflect the interest in tales of wonder which had absorbed Scott during his period of poetry. *Guy Mannering, or the Astrologer* is a masterpiece because of its richly humorous portrayal of character. *The Antiquary* is like *Guy Mannering* in its creation of the characters Oldbuck and Ochiltree. It should be noticed that these two novels were not historical, as *Waverley* had attempted to be. *The Black Dwarf* is of less importance than any of the three novels preceding it; but it was quickly followed by the famous *Old Mortality.* This book and *Quentin Durward,* to be mentioned again in the third group, were the foundations of the so-called *historical novel. Rob Roy* was the one of Scott's books which more than any other helped finally to unite the Highlands and the Lowlands of Scotland in sympathetic friendliness after centuries of hostility. *The Heart of Midlothian* is the story of Jeanie Deans, the finest of Scott's women characters. Following this came *The Bride of Lammermoor,* Scott's really great novel among his trials at profound tragedy, often compared with *Romeo and Juliet* because of the tragedy centering about the love motive, and truly worthy to be compared, in its somberness and dreadful gloom, with Shakespeare's *King Lear* or Balzac's *Père Goriot. The Legend of Montrose* ends this first group.

The second group consists of *Ivanhoe, The Monastery, The Abbot, Kenilworth, The Pirate, The Fortunes of Nigel,* and *Peveril of the Peak. Ivanhoe* is one of the best of all plot-novels, perhaps less spontaneously created, therefore, than many of the

rest by Scott. Doubtless it has been read by more people than any of his others. *The Monastery* and *The Abbot* are glorious books. They deal with the fascinating story of Mary Queen of Scots, and yet are not quite so sympathetic with the life of her century as are the books which deal with the life of the two centuries following. *Kenilworth* presents many celebrated pictures of Queen Elizabeth and her courtiers. *The Pirate* is Scott's sea story. *The Fortunes of Nigel* contains what is usually acknowledged to be Sir Walter's finest historical portrait, that of James VI of Scotland and I of England. The inconsistencies of life were not quite so captivating to Scott as to Jane Austen, but in the character of King James they are handled at their richest and best, — or worst. *Peveril of the Peak* is very vigorous and vivacious in many of its scenes, yet was not so favorably received by its readers as any of the stories which had preceded it, because in it the author failed to sustain the reputation for "naturalism" which he had so firmly established.

The third group, beginning in 1823, comprises *Quentin Durward*, *St. Ronan's Well*, *Redgauntlet*, *The Betrothed*, *The Talisman*, *Woodstock*, *The Highland Widow*, *The Two Drovers*, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, *The Fair Maid of Perth*, *Anne of Geierstein*, *Count Robert of Paris*, and *Castle Dangerous*. *Quentin Durward*, along with *Old Mortality* (in the first group), is to be considered as forever assuring in fiction the place of the historical novel. It carries its readers across the channel, and enters a new field for Scott, that of a foreign land. The scene is laid in France at the court of Louis XI. The sensation the book created in Paris was as big as that created by *Waverley* in Edinburgh and by *Ivanhoe* (an English "Scotch-novel") in London. Goethe, at Weimar, said, "All is great in the Waverley novels; material, effect, characters, execution." *St. Ronan's Well* was a novel of

society. In it we pass from battle fields and courts to tea-tables. Balzac thought it Scott's most finished production. But, even so, Scott could not describe the movements, feelings, and characters of ordinary life as Jane Austen had succeeded in describing them. He did not try it again. Into his next book, *Redgauntlet*, Scott put more of the real personal experiences of his own life than into any other. This novel would be eminently worth while if only for "Wandering Willie's Tale," an interesting short-story which is inserted within it. *The Betrothed* and *The Talisman* make up a pair of novels which included what at the time of their publication were called "Tales of the Crusaders." *The Betrothed* is not a first-rate tale, if we take the average of its writer's work as the standard for judging. But *The Talisman* is one of the most brilliant books ever written. Here Richard, the Lion-hearted, appears again, along with his equally noble friend and enemy, the Mohammedan Saladin, each of whom every boyish heart, whether young or old, delights to honor. *Woodstock* is the last of these novels which can be counted among those of the first rank. The treatment of Oliver Cromwell and of Charles II in this book, while rather too generous to the historical facts in the case of each, has delighted and gained the admiration of readers without number. *The Highland Widow*, *The Two Drovers*, and *The Surgeon's Daughter* were included in the first series of *Chronicles of the Canongate; The Fair Maid of Perth* forming the second series. The first two are rather inferior works, but the third, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, has allured some readers to think it among the wizard's best. Both of the series of the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, and *Anne of Geierstein*, *Count Robert of Paris*, and *Castle Dangerous* were written after Scott's mind and hand had been weakened by the terrible blow of financial ruin which left him a debtor for over half a million dollars. It was a terrible blow, both be-

cause Scott had implicitly trusted the publishers with whom he had gone into partnership and who brought this ruin upon him, and because he was fond of wealth. Lockhart rightly explains this fondness for wealth as being due to the imagination of Scott, which loved to satisfy itself in the magnificence which wealth could bring about him. *The Fair Maid of Perth* and *Anne of Geierstein* are excellent stories, containing many lively scenes almost as brilliantly various and interesting as those in the earlier novels, yet they show that the darkening shadows of physical and mental ill health were creeping upon the devoted author. The last two books, *Count Robert of Paris* and *Castle Dangerous*, might better never have been written. They were wrung out of his tired brain in 1831, and Sir Walter died in 1832.

While Scott was a great romancer, he differed from the eighteenth-century romanticists (1) in that he was a superb humorist and (2) in that his work was realistic. He does deal with the past chiefly, but it is the actions of men that illustrate permanent human nature which interested him in the past. To him the past was not unlike the present; it was himself back there. Hence he wrote realistically to life as it is now, even more than realistically to life as it had been then. He was *like* the eighteenth-century romanticists in a love of the picturesque, of high color, and of strange contrasts. In his picturing of life in richly colored circumstances he was a romanticist. In all he showed a colossal strength. Possibly, taken all in all, he still remains as the greatest of all novelists, even though an individual work by one or another novelist, such as *Tom Jones* by Henry Fielding, or *Henry Esmond* by Thackeray, may be better than any one of his; and if it were not for the too lengthy historical discussions with which several of his novels begin, doubtless he would be read almost as much to-day as he ever has been.

III. The Lesser Writers of the Period

Division. — The secondary literary product of this period, that is, the work other than the poetry of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, and other than the novels of Jane Austen and Scott, may be divided into the work of journalists, poets, historians, essayists, and minor novelists. Some of it may be dealt with in a very summary way, not because it was unimportant, but because it does not need such ample attention in an age so crowded with better literary matter.

Journalism. — This was the era of the founding of the great journals, the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Quarterly Review*, and *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1802, 1809, 1817, respectively. The most important editor of the first was the critic, Francis Jeffrey; of the second was the biographer of Burns and of Sir Walter Scott, John G. Lockhart; and of the third was the Edinburgh professor, John Wilson, who usually wrote under the pen-name of "Christopher North." Thomas De Quincey was a distinguished contributor to these magazines. When we come to the essayists, we shall find him more than a mere journalist. The influential editors and encyclopedists, William and Robert Chambers and Charles Knight, also did their work within this period.

The lesser poetry. — Of the lesser poets, Southey is to-day better known because of his association with Coleridge and because of his prose *Life of Nelson*, than for any of his verse, excepting for the very popular, but not very poetic, *How the Water Comes Down at Lodore*, which has been delightfully parodied by a more minor poet, Pennell, in *How the Daughters Come Down to Dunoon*. Southey attempted a grand epic, entitled *Roderick, the Last of the Goths*. It is a highly pictorial poem, but with not enough of shifting of scene and of variety

of incident, not enough even of probability or of general "human interest," to be a satisfactory epic.

Another minor poet was Samuel Rogers, who had printed his *Pleasures of Memory* as early as 1792. His *Italy* was first published in 1822. The *Italy* in the edition of 1830 was illustrated by J. M. W. Turner, the world's greatest landscape painter, and is perhaps better known for his illustrations than for the verses of Rogers. Leigh Hunt was both poet and essayist. His *Abou Ben Adhem* is recited everywhere; but his drama, *The Story of Rimini*, founded upon the story of Paola and Francesca as told by Dante, is the most finished work he produced. Mrs. Felicia Hemans belongs to this era. "The boy stood on the burning deck" and "The breaking waves dashed high" are lines beginning two of her poems very familiar to both English and American children. An even much more popular poetess, probably because she was even more romantic, was "L. E. L." or Letitia E. Landon. *The Golden Violet* is representative of her work. The leader of the school of wits and punsters in verse was Thomas Hood. No man was more clever at giving "the sinister wink with the dexter eye" than Hood. He was the author of some sentimental verse that, despite its sentimentality, has been useful in helping others to express right emotions; for example, such poems as *The Bridge of Sighs* and *The Song of the Shirt.* Thomas Campbell continued his "classical" poetic style begun in *Pleasures of Hope*, 1799, by writing *Gertrude of Wyoming*, published in 1809. But he will be known forever for the poems which he wrote after he had surrendered to the more stirring elements of the romantic movement. A few of those poems are *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, *Ye Mariners of England*, *Battle of the Baltic*, *Lochiel*, and *Hohenlinden.*

Tom Moore's *Lalla Rookh* was printed in 1817. It is a ro-

mance with an oriental setting, and has been popular for nearly the century which has passed since its publication. Moore is sometimes said to have done for Ireland in his songs what Burns did for Scotland; but the difficulty that stands in the way of accepting that statement is that Moore's *Irish Melodies* are lacking in "Irishism." They are excellent poems, in many instances; and as "poetry which does not get beyond the sound of the parish steeple" is not very good poetry, so the converse is also true, that poetry which has a universal appeal, and not a national one only, is good poetry; and since Moore is so widely read, one may conclude that Moore is all the better poet for not being merely national. *Oft in the Stilly Night* is one of his successes. He is worth much study as one of the foremost lyric poets among the *minor* writers of verse.

Walter Savage Landor was not and is not a popular poet, but scholars and poets themselves have delighted in him. Shelley loved to recite Landor's *Gebir*, a fantastic oriental tale, published in 1798. Of one of Landor's dramas, *Count Julian*, published in 1812, Southey made the extravagant statement, "No drama to which it can be compared has ever yet been written, and none ever will be, except it be by the same hand." The story of this drama suggests Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*.

History. — Of the historians who lived in this early nineteenth-century period, the foremost were Henry Hallam, Thomas Babington Macaulay, and Henry Hart Milman. Sir Charles Lyell might be mentioned as a historian of the earth's surface. His *Principles of Geology*, 1833, has done more than any one other book to further the study of geology, and it is written with the fineness of order and attractiveness of statement that make it a book which no student will fail to recognize as literature. The philosophic thought which Lyell put into his *Principles* has had a noteworthy effect upon the writing of

human history, too, for it has helped to teach men to be less impatient in their following of long processes and slow movements in history.

Although Macaulay was born in the year 1800, his historical works, excepting an occasional historical essay, were not in print until after 1837, and hence they will be reserved for discussion under the Victorian Era. Until our own day two works by Henry Hallam were found in the historical sections of every library, great or small, and were read as authoritative. They were filled with clear and cool thinking based upon immense knowledge. They have not been so much read since the coming into prominence of the " scientific school " of historians, during the last years of Hallam's century. His two great books were *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages* and *The Constitutional History of England.* Henry Hart Milman, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, was a poet at the beginning of his career; but his best work was done in prose history. There is probably no book upon its subject so popular as Milman's *History of the Jews*, a work of very liberal scholarship. His six volumes of *History of Latin Christianity* are not only rich in details but authoritative. Milman also prepared an edition of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, with notes which did what notes rarely succeed in doing, — they made the book of more interest, even to the general reader.

The essay. Lamb. — Charles Lamb is the famous name which begins the brief list of notable essayists of this short period. Lamb was ten years older than De Quincey, the latter being born in 1785. Neither Lamb nor De Quincey found an outlet for the best work which he could do until Lamb was forty-five years of age and De Quincey thirty-five. In that year, 1820, the *London Magazine* was founded, and much more freedom for critical writers in the expression of their original

and personal ideas became possible than in the older and more staid magazines of Edinburgh. Lamb now wrote the *Essays of Elia* (pronounced by their author El-lia). Such essays as these are known as "familiar essays," for they have the intimate tone of an easy-chair conversation carried on between the writer and a sympathetic friend. They are not written as dialogues, but they read almost like conversation with one side suppressed. They are whimsical and merry, brilliant and yet genuinely truthful, filled with that indefinable thing which is called charm; in fact, a sort of "divine chit-chat." Lamb was not acquainted with any language but the English. He was, for this reason, and for others such as temperament and as training in other things than languages, peculiarly English. But he was a city-Englishman. He loved London, not quite with the passion with which Johnson had regarded the great metropolis, but with all the deep glow of affection with which Wordsworth loved the country.

The first work to attract considerable attention to Lamb was the *Tales from Shakespeare*, in which he told the stories of the tragedies, and his sister, Mary Lamb, told the stories of the comedies of Shakespeare, in a manner most delightful, and remarkably true to the feeling of the plays. His two volumes of collected *Letters* have by no means the perfect construction of sentence or the unity of form of his essays, yet they are past describing in their wit, information, and sincerity, and even strength.

Lamb has been called a "belated Elizabethan." He was intensely interested in the literature, especially the drama, of the Elizabethan age, and was as independent and free in his own thought as the Shakespeareans were. Yet he was no worshiper of that time as if it were the only Golden Age, any more than he was of his own time. "Hang the age," he said, "I'll write for

antiquity." What seems to be a strange thing to many lovers of Shakespeare is that Lamb thought the playing of the dramas took away their fineness of effect. He believed in reading them only. He said, "The plays of Shakespeare are less calculated for stage performances than those of almost any other dramatist whatever." Coleridge felt about the same way. Doubtless they thought it impossible for any one indirectly in contact with the dramas (as one is when he sees them acted) keenly to sense their great imaginative quality. "The Lear of Shakespeare cannot be acted," Lamb said. He thought the same of Falstaff, Macbeth, Hamlet, and the rest. Great actors differ with him. Almost every actor of consequence hopes sometime to play the part of Hamlet. Lamb's volume of *Specimens of English Dramatists Contemporary with Shakespeare* brought to the literary public a great deal of forgotten literature, edited in such choice way as no other Englishman could have edited them, for Lamb had a fine critical gift. He believed in " the vigorous passions and virtues clad in flesh and blood " of the old dramatists. Lamb was a critic of painting as well as of drama, and his paper on the *Genius of Hogarth* proclaimed that eighteenth-century painter to be what he was, " the great English master of imaginative painting, Shakespearean in intensity of vision, in profusion of thought, in many-sided sympathy with human life, in the blending of laughter and tears," the man who insisted that " There is but one school, that of Nature," *not* adding, as did Sir Joshua Reynolds, " and of that school the old masters hold the key." Yet Hogarth has not had as much influence as the man who wrote of him.

It is hard to select the best of Lamb's essays, for what is most appealing to one reader is not always so to another. While his essay on the *Tragedies of Shakespeare*, for its fervor and nobility, is, possibly, superior to any other of his writings,

yet there is no doubt but that the following are much more popular: *A Dissertation upon Roast Pig, A Bachelor's Complaint of the Behavior of Married People, In Praise of Chimney-Sweepers, Sanity of True Genius, Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist, Old China, The Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis.* Two of his essays, *The Superannuated Man* and *Dream Children: a Revery*, deserve special mention; for in the former he frankly portrayed himself, and in the latter, while he was equally frank about his inner longings, yet in addition to that he achieved the writing of an almost perfect short-story.

Coleridge's prose. — As Falstaff is "the cause of wit that is in other men," so Samuel Taylor Coleridge has been the cause of much of thought that is in other men's books. Sir Francis Bacon once said, "Mr. Savile was asked by my lord of Essex his opinion touching poets, who answered my lord: 'He thought them the best writers, next to those that write prose.'" Had Bacon had before him such fiercely beautiful lines as Coleridge's

> The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
> The furrow followed free:
> We were the first that ever burst
> Into that silent sea,

and any prose page from Coleridge, he might have quoted my lord of Essex's friend with less of approval. Coleridge in nearly all of his pages of prose is unreadable excepting to the trained and disciplined mind. His most systematic and perhaps best work in prose is his *Aids to Reflection.* Many a thinker and writer, when his mind refuses to bring to the surface ideas with "stuff and substance" in them, has taken from his shelf Coleridge's *Aids* and after a few minutes of close reading has found his mind to be stimulated to fruitful work once more. Coleridge was very strongly under the influence of Kant and

Schlegel and other German philosophers and literary critics, and his language reflects the Chinese puzzle style, as Schopenhauer called it, of the German philosophic prose sentence. His contemporaries all bore witness that Coleridge's *talk* was much more influential over his literary friends and worshipers than his writing. He was perhaps the greatest of thoughtful monologists. William Hazlitt once undertook to give a unified impression of the content of Coleridge's teeming mind by writing one sentence about it. The sentence is probably the longest in the English language. It ought to delight a German philosopher, for it contains eight hundred and forty-eight words.

Hazlitt. — William Hazlitt is one of the first-rate critical writers of modern times. Not so philosophic as Coleridge, nor so scientific as Matthew Arnold, nor so literary in his style as Lamb, yet, by dint of personal enthusiasm for what he wrote about, he opened the eyes of thousands of readers who had failed to see the rich beauties and the fine values of the writers of the past. He wrote and lectured brilliantly, most of his lectures appearing later in print. His most valuable works are the *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*, the *Lectures on the English Poets*, *Lectures on the English Comic Writers*, and *Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*. Hazlitt had a mind of his own, and, though early in life he was much dominated in thought by Coleridge, yet when he came to write upon Shakespeare, he objected to Coleridge's dependence upon "a foreign critic to give reasons for the faith which we English have in Shakespeare." The foreign critic was A. W. Schlegel. Hazlitt also protested, almost with resentment, against the low opinion held by the German and English romanticists concerning the French men of letters: Montaigne, Rabelais, and Molière.

Hunt. — James Henry Leigh Hunt edited at least six different magazines, and was a contributor to many more. His poetry is worth a great deal more than his prose, but his essay upon *Wit and Humour*, printed in 1846, after the early period of nineteenth-century literature had closed, is the best known of all his prose writings. It is of considerable value. The "psychological" studies in the same subject made in our own day add little but new forms of statement to what Hunt said upon it.

Wordsworth. — Wordsworth should be at least mentioned as an essayist of this period, for his collected prose works fill three large octavo volumes. The famous essay prefixed to the edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 should be read by all who are interested in the language of poetry; though it must be observed that Wordsworth's theory that the simplest and most familiar language is best for use in poetry fails to take into account that it was just that sort of poetic usage which had made the verse writing of the eighteenth century largely mere verse and not poetry. It also fails to take into account the fact that the language used by Burns (whom, no doubt, Wordsworth had much in mind), while familiar enough to the Scotch, was very unfamiliar to Englishmen of Burns's time.

Landor. — Walter Savage Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* between characters of all times, from the Greek classical to his own, are read for their grace and charm by the cultured student, rarely by others. Landor is like Sir Thomas Browne, Robert Burton, and Thomas Fuller of the seventeenth century, and like Ruskin and Pater of his own later days, in the elaborate character of his style; but to the "average" man who reads, his splendidly finished phrases are, even more than in the case of Addison's, too often rather meaningless, if not entirely so. But it must be admitted that for their magnificent artistry those phrases are imperishably beautiful.

Whately. — Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, whose *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Bonaparte* was a theological rather than a historical work, and was extremely "taking," did some very serviceable work in his *Elements of Logic* and his *Elements of Rhetoric.* The latter is still used in a few schools as a textbook; but it is more than a mere class handbook, for it contains the best modern elaboration of the logic of Aristotle, the ancient Greek, applied to popular argumentation.

De Quincey. — De Quincey was aroused to much thinking by the so-called "Lake Poets," Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, near whom he lived; and the journalists, the editors of the great magazines of Edinburgh and London, led him to do most of his writing. De Quincey classified his writings under the three heads of autobiographical, critical, and imaginative. The classification is of little worth, for it is impossible to tell, as with Poe, his contemporary in America, when the author is being truthful and when hoaxing. Nearly all of his work is written in "impassioned prose," such as stimulates the imagination of the reader to vivid action. All his works belong rather to the literature of power than to the literature of knowledge; a distinction made by De Quincey himself in the following words, — with further elaboration, however: "There is, first, the literature of *knowledge*, and, secondly, the literature of *power*. The function of the first is to *teach;* the function of the second is to *move;* the first is a rudder, the second an oar or a sail." De Quincey too often indulges in over-minute and subtle analyses and distinctions; but this is the common fault of the very logical mind, and in spite of this habit and the habit of unnecessary digressions from the main theme in hand, his descriptions and his expositions are unsurpassed and many of them unequaled. His *Summary View of the History of Greek Literature*, pages 242-255 of volume X of his Collected Works, is one of the finest

and most easily memorable passages of exposition in any language. It is highly ingenious and at the same time perfectly convincing, which ingenious things so seldom are. The student should not fail to read this passage and make it a part of his own mental furnishing. His *Autobiography*, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, *The English Mail Coach*, and *Our Ladies of Sorrow* are renowned for their imaginative splendor of thought and picture. The *Confessions* must not be taken too seriously, for although their author was terribly and almost unbelievably addicted to laudanum drinking, yet, as Professor Saintsbury suggests, these confessions may be the "results of his dreams, or of his fancy and literary genius working on his dreams, or of his fancy and genius by themselves."

One passage from "Levana" in *Our Ladies of Sorrow* is too lofty to leave unnoticed. Of it David Masson in his *Life of De Quincey* in the English Men of Letters series, has said: "This is prose-poetry; but it is more. It is a permanent addition to the mythology of the human race. As the Graces are three, as the Fates are three, as the Furies are three, as the Muses were originally three, so may the varieties and degrees of misery that there are in the world, and the proportions of their distribution among mankind, be represented to the human imagination forever by De Quincey's Three Ladies of Sorrow and his sketch of their figures and kingdoms."

Macaulay. — The noteworthy work of Macaulay during this period consists of his three essays on *Milton*, *Machiavelli*, and *Johnson*. The first was published in the *Edinburgh Review* in August, 1824. The editor, Jeffrey, in acknowledging the manuscript said, "The more I think, the less I can conceive where you picked up that style." Macaulay's style consisted, in its form, of an accumulation of antithetical ideas which he stated in balanced and parallel forms both in phrases and in sen-

tences, and even in paragraphs. He filled his paragraphs with comparisons and contrasts. The style is, therefore, strongly analytical, and yet it is not filled with the nice distinctions which a more judicial temper than Macaulay's would put into such analyses. Then, his style, despite this flood of comparisons and contrasts, is one in which the movement of the thought sweeps swiftly on, never hesitating, by no means ever weakening into even one languid sentence. This bold, swift, onward-rushing movement gives an air of dogmatism to his thought; and that is precisely the character of his thought. It is highly dogmatic. Macaulay decides every thing in terms of his own likes and dislikes. But the strange thing about his essays is that he never expected them to be read beyond his own generation. "They are not expected to be highly finished," he said; "their natural life is only six weeks." They were written for magazine readers; but their writer was a man of great gifts of expression, if not of profound thought, and the manly character and boundless self-confidence which stood back of these gifts make the essays attractive and moving to all who read them.

The essay on *Machiavelli* is a good illustration, an excellent one indeed, of the manner in which its author habitually planned his work in its larger elements. He was rather mechanical about it. If he wished it to be thought that a certain idea or phase of thought was more important than another, he would simply emphasize it by giving to it larger space,—more words, sentences, paragraphs. So it is in this essay on *Machiavelli*. The essay is worth the student's close analysis in order, if for no other reason, that he may see that emphasis may be a matter of length. To be sure, it is better to gain emphasis by force of thought than by length of treatment. It was one of Macaulay's defects not to do so; and yet it showed plainly that he knew that his

work, to be effective, must be planned. His essays are always pointed, energetic, and sincere, whatever else may be said of them. The essay on *Johnson* is the best of all brief treatments of that marvelous man, though it cannot, nor can anything else, take the place of Boswell's *Life*. All of Macaulay's work is illustrative of bluff old Doctor Johnson's statement that "The greater part of an author's time is spent in reading in order to write; a man will turn over half a library to make one book." Few men have read more than Macaulay did, and perhaps no man ever had a better memory.

The rest of his works came to the public after the beginning of Victoria's reign, and will be discussed in the next chapter.

Minor novelists before 1837. — The minor novelists of the age ending with 1837 were Jane Porter, Maria Edgeworth, Captain Frederick Marryat, Bulwer Lytton, and Thomas Love Peacock. Jane Porter's two famous books are *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *Scottish Chiefs*. Both are fascinating national tales, and have been extremely popular. Maria Edgeworth's books for children are more delightful and her *Essay on Irish Bulls* more charming than any of her novels; but if there were no other purpose in mentioning her novels, the fact that Sir Walter said that they had provided the suggestion for his Scotch novels would be sufficient. Her *Castle Rackrent* awakens a warm-hearted fervor for the Irish characters whom she loves to portray. Captain Marryat has won undying fame by his nautical stories. No boy who loves the sea, and who loves adventure wherever met, can afford to lose the intense excitement which the reading of *Mr. Midshipman Easy* will arouse. Three of Lord Lytton's historical novels, *The Last Days of Pompeii*, *Rienzi*, and *The Last of the Barons*, were, until the immense flood of late nineteenth-century fiction, read by all who loved the novel. They have great value to one who still cares

to become familiar with the spirit and customs of the times in which the stories are laid. The alluring life of the destroyed city of Pompeii, the power of the king-maker, Earl Warwick, and the patriotism of the last of the Tribunes of Rome who endeavored during the late middle ages to revive the ancient grandeur of the Eternal City, are appealing themes to both the thinking novel-reader and the historian. Bulwer Lytton's short-story, *The House and the Brain, or The Haunted and the Haunters*, is one of the best ghost-stories ever written. It has not the originality of conception of the story by a contemporary American, Fitz-James O'Brien, entitled *What Was It; A Mystery*. Yet it is the best handling of the terror story in which the two complementary passions, love of life and fear of death, are wrought upon by mere mechanical contrivance, as was the fashion when Lord Lytton wrote, in the dying days of the school of terror in fiction, even more than it was in the days of its founders, Horace Walpole, Mrs. Radcliffe, and "Monk" Lewis.

Peacock. — Thomas Love Peacock deserves more than even a paragraph to himself. It is with hesitancy that he is here classed with "minor" novelists; he rather stands by himself between the minor and the major novelists. There are no other novels in English precisely like those of Peacock. No other Englishman has had the power of derisive laughter so fully developed as Peacock had. He was like the Frenchman Voltaire, in his keen irony based upon thorough understanding of what he ridiculed. His *Nightmare Abbey* is illustrative of his intensely fine satire. In it he draws portraits of Coleridge, the metaphysical pessimist, and of Byron, the sentimental pessimist, and even caricatures the love affairs of Shelley, though he does not name the men Coleridge, Byron, and Shelley. All is handled in the most fantastic way, so that while one is

face to face with the most familiar facts, yet the fanciful treatment allows him the full escape from familiar fact which the ridiculed romanticists were ever seeking. It is astonishing to learn that the sensitive Shelley read *Nightmare Abbey* with the greatest of enjoyment, and could find no praise adequate for both its lightness and its strength.

But it is in Peacock's *The Misfortunes of Elphin* that we discover the richest vein of satire, and, as if by accident, some of the best ballad poetry ever written. That one of its characters has been called " the Welsh Falstaff " is sufficient indication of the deeply humorous character of the story. Peacock takes legendary romantic matter, such as the medieval tales concerning King Arthur are filled with, and in the most grotesque and yet subtle fashion, in a clear and splendidly poetic manner, in both prose and verse manipulates those old tales in such a way as to pour most side-shaking ridicule upon the " world full of fools " who were writing of and worshiping the unlifelike and meaningless aspect of the legends of Wales and Brittany. And yet he was a better romanticist than they, if romanticism be thought of as a revival of the truth of the older life. He had no use for mystification, which he thought most of the "mystery" of the contemporary romanticists to be. But he had great use, a use that would give high delight to life, for the real and clearly human elements in the life of those who had lived in the half-wild state of the days of yore; and we learn in his book to love those in whom these so human elements showed themselves, and to wish we might have but a small share in their existence. If one were greatly to intensify and heighten the subtle but mild humor of the Mother Goose rhyme of " When good King Arthur ruled his land," thought by some to have been written by Goldsmith, he might have some fairly adequate notion of the viewpoint of Peacock in relation to those times.

No doubt whatever that his book contains a much truer picture of the "regal realities" of King Arthur's times than do the writings of Sir Thomas Malory and of Tennyson. *Headlong Hall*, written earlier than *Nightmare Abbey* and *The Misfortunes of Elphin*, and *Crotchet Castle*, written much later than they, are just as jovial, just as pointedly sharp in their attack upon fads and crazes, and just as superbly interesting as the books to which we have given more attention.

Early nineteenth-century literature in America. — In America at the beginning of the nineteenth century there was at least one man who was giving his life exclusively to literature, Charles Brockden Brown. By 1802 Brown had produced seven romances, after the manner of the contemporary school of terror in England. *Wieland; or The Transformation* and *Ormond; or The Secret Witness* are titles of two of them, and are sufficient by title to suggest the nature of their contents. Before 1820 Washington Irving had written his *Knickerbocker History of New York* and the *Sketch-Book*, the latter containing *Rip Van Winkle*, *The Spectre Bridegroom*, and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. Irving "is not an American Goldsmith; he is an Anglo-Saxon Irving." Neither was James Fenimore Cooper an American Scott; he was an Anglo-Saxon Cooper. Cooper's *The Spy*, *The Pilot*, and most of the *Leather-Stocking Tales* were published before 1837, the date ending this period. They hardly need describing to an American boy, — nor to many English boys, for that matter. The New York editor, William Cullen Bryant, published most of his best poems before 1825, *Thanatopsis* and *To a Water Fowl* being published in *The North American Review* in 1817 and 1818, respectively. By 1837 Poe had published his earlier poems and a few of his short-stories, — *Berenice*, probably the first short-story almost perfectly employing the modern technique, being printed in

1835. Edward Coate Pinkney's *A Health*, so well known for its lines beginning

I fill this cup to one made up of loveliness alone,

was written during this period. Pinkney and Poe were both Southern poets. It will be seen that the literature of the United States was thus far produced in either New York or the South. In the last year of this period, however, the literary geography was changed, and New England became prominent. In 1837 appeared the first series of Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales*, and in that same year Emerson delivered the declaration of American intellectual independence in his stirring Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard University on *The American Scholar*. Nothing of any great value had come from New England previous to that year, unless we except *Old Ironsides* and *The Last Leaf*, by Oliver Wendell Holmes. Unquestionably Cooper, Hawthorne, and Poe are worthy of comparison with their contemporaries in the Old World, Hawthorne being one of the greatest novelists of any country or time; but we can merely mention them in a book devoted chiefly to the literature of England.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the general characteristics of the nineteenth-century life and thought.

2. Give the dates marking off the periods of its literature.

3. What features especially characterize the first period?

4. Who were the great poets of the first period of the nineteenth century, and who its great novelists?

5. Discuss the effects of the French Revolution upon English poets.

6. How would you distinguish the poetic work of Coleridge from that of Wordsworth, and how that of Scott from both of them?

7. How distinguish the work of Byron from that of Shelley, and that of Keats from each of the other two?

8. What poem by Shelley do you like best? What makes you like it better than others by him?

9. Memorize Keats's *The Human Seasons;* also the stanzas of *The Eve of Saint Agnes* which you like best.

10. What were the chief influences molding the work of Shelley? of Keats?

11. Why could not the pictures in Keats's *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* be painted?

12. Compare the work of Jane Austen with that of Sir Walter Scott.

13. *Ivanhoe:* (*a*) Compare the first chapter with the opening chapter of *Waverley;* with the opening chapter of *Quentin Durward.* (*b*) Draw a plan of the lists from the description in Chapter VII. (*c*) Of Chapters XII, XIII, and XXIX, which do you think the best? Give your reasons. (*d*) Find as many passages as you can illustrating the differences between Saxon and Norman. (*e*) Point out some differences between conversation in fiction and conversation in actual life. (*f*) In landscape description do you think Scott is better in his novels or in his poems? (*g*) What is the most picturesque incident in *Ivanhoe?*

14. Commit to memory one of the poems of Thomas Campbell, preferably one of his patriotic poems.

15. Which of the essays of Charles Lamb is your favorite? Why?

16. Name the other essayists of the period; also three of the lesser novelists.

17. Who were the leading writers in America before 1837? What have you already read of their writings?

READING LIST FOR THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

POETRY

COLERIDGE,	*Christabel and Other Poems.* Edited by Hannaford Bennett.
WORDSWORTH,	Ode on Intimations of Immortality, The Solitary Reaper, Ode to Duty. In *Selected Poems,* edited by Clara L. Thomson.
SCOTT,	*The Lady of the Lake.* Edited by L. DuPont Syle.
BYRON,	Childe Harold's Departure, The Destruction of Sennacherib, Mazeppa's Ride, Sonnet on Chillon. In *Poems,* chosen and arranged by Matthew Arnold.

SHELLEY, The Cloud, To a Skylark, Ode to the West Wind. In *Poems by Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats*, edited by James Webber Linn.

KEATS, Isabella, The Eve of Saint Agnes, Ode on a Grecian Urn, La Belle Dame Sans Merci. In *Poems*, edited by Arlo Bates.

ESSAY

MACAULAY, *Milton, Johnson.* "Everyman's Library." *Miscellaneous Essays.* "Winston's Illustrated Handy Classics."

LAMB, A Dissertation upon Roast Pig, Dream Children. In *A Book of English Essays*, edited by C. T. Winchester.

DE QUINCEY, Joan of Arc, The English Mail-Coach. Edited by J. M. Hart.

NOVEL

DICKENS, *Pickwick Papers.* "Everyman's Library." (See next period.)

JANE AUSTEN, *Pride and Prejudice.* Winston's "Illustrated Handy Classics."

SCOTT, *Waverley, Ivanhoe, Quentin Durward, Rob Roy, The Heart of Midlothian, The Pirate, Guy Mannering, Kenilworth, The Talisman.* "Everyman's Library."

MARRYAT, *Mr. Midshipman Easy.* "Everyman's Library."

JANE PORTER, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, with Introduction by Ernest A. Baker.

BULWER LYTTON, *The Last Days of Pompeii, Rienzi.* "Everyman's Library."

PEACOCK, *The Misfortunes of Elphin*, with Introduction by George Saintsbury.

BIOGRAPHY

SOUTHEY, *Life of Nelson.* Edited by Frederick H. Law.

HELPFUL BOOKS ON THE PERIOD

A History of Nineteenth Century Literature, George Saintsbury. (The Macmillan Company.)

The French Revolution and English Literature, Edward Dowden. (Scribner's.)

English Poetry from Blake to Browning, W. Macneale Dixon. (Methuen & Co.)

The Age of Wordsworth, C. H. Herford. (George Bell & Sons.)

The French Revolution and the English Poets, A. E. Hancock. (Henry Holt & Co.)

Shelley, Godwin, and Their Circle, H. N. Brailsford. (Henry Holt & Co.)

History of English Literature and of the English Language, pages 435 to 520, George L. Craik. (Griffin, Bohn, & Co.)

See also Bibliography on The Novel, in Chapter IX, page 378.

CHAPTER VII

THE VICTORIAN ERA

1837–1890

I. General Characteristics

Science and imagination. — The nineteenth century was above all a century of progress in science. Contrary, however, to what one might carelessly think, the rise of science to great importance by no means weakened the power of the imagination. The fact of the matter is that the highest achievements of science are due to the exercise of the power of the imagination rather than to that of any other power, though its working comes generally at the end of a long process of patient observation and correlation of the results of what has been observed. After such a process, the imagination, as in the case of Newton or of Darwin, seizes the correlated results and from them wrests a conclusion which we call a law of nature. A law of nature is simply a statement covering what Huxley called "an observed uniformity." Every one recognizes that it is the imaginative power of the mind which makes possible the work of such a man as Thomas Edison, or Commodore Peary, or the man who builds a transcontinental railway, or one who constructs a Panama or a Cape Cod or a Kiel canal. The imagination is not confined to the operations of the spirit of a fictionist or of a poet only. Hence it is that science, instead of retarding the advance of the expression of the human spirit in

literature and the arts generally, has aided that expression beyond our power yet fully to comprehend. If it is said that the imagination of the poet or of the tale-teller often fades away into mere fancy-mongering, the same may with equal truth be said of the imagination of the scientist, of the inventor, or of the captain of industry. It is the most commonly observed of all things in human life that we are hourly coming to conclusions in science, in invention, and in industry, which the next hour sees us abandoning.

Division. — We may consider the literature of the Victorian era under the heads of history, prose fiction, criticism, science, and poetry. Although science was of such immense consequence, it came to be favorable in its effect upon history and fiction and criticism rather in our own day than in the Victorian era. The Victorians were greatly affected by it, but many of them almost as much in the way of struggling against it as in coöperating with it. Poetry was, strange as it may seem, more quickly and directly molded by scientific thought than any of the other forms of literature, because of the sensitiveness of the poetic mind to progressive movements in thought.

II. History

The leading historians of the period we are now upon were Thomas Carlyle, Thomas Babington Macaulay, George Grote, Edward Augustus Freeman, John Richard Green, and James Anthony Froude. No other nation has ever furnished in so brief a time such an array of brilliant writers upon the past affairs of men as these six Englishmen; and across the Atlantic in America there were four others who were hardly inferior to them, — Prescott, Motley, Parkman, and Bancroft.

Carlyle. — The historical work of paramount importance done by Carlyle is in two books, *History of the French Revolution*

and *History of Frederick the Great.* The first appeared in 1837, the second not until 1865. In these books Carlyle showed himself to be the foremost historian England had produced since Edward Gibbon. The *French Revolution* is matchless in the vividness of its descriptive passages, extraordinarily imaginative, yet with no distortion of facts, and overflowing with philosophical interpretation of events. "Quack-ridden," said Carlyle, "in that one word lies all misery whatsoever." This history and many others of his works were written to show the world the truth of that statement. The *Frederick the Great* is the leading interpretation of the history of eighteenth-century Germany, the period of the rise of Prussia. Carlyle's *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* should also be noted as the most authoritative work upon the life of the great Commoner.

Macaulay. — As early as 1828 Macaulay, in the *Edinburgh Review*, proposed a theory of history, that it should be pictorial and vivid, that a writer could produce these effects without violating truth, that there was no reason why a history should not be as entertaining as a historical novel, and that even if it were amusing, it need not be, for that fact, any the less accurate, dignified, or useful. To illustrate his theory of historical writing, Macaulay published, between 1848 and 1855, a four volume *History of England from the Accession of James II*, which he said he expected to take the place of the novel upon the drawing-room table of young ladies. These delightful volumes did not quite succeed in doing that, but, along with his *Essays*, they did furnish the main equipment for serious conversation among great numbers of people in the mid-Victorian days. They are most interesting even to-day.

Grote. — George Grote was a banker, as was the novelist Joseph Henry Shorthouse, and the American poet, Edmund Clarence Stedman, and as recently was Kenneth Grahame,

Secretary of the Bank of England and the author of the charming *Golden Age* and *Wind in the Willows*. Grote's *History of Greece* is almost an argument in favor of the Liberal party in Great Britain, for it is all written with its interest centering about the democratic political institutions of the Greek city-states. But it makes the writings of the ancient Greek prose writers, which were previously but school textbooks, appear to be vivid and stimulating pictures and arguments favoring the growth of liberal movements in the politics of the world. Grote was most careful and scholarly, but his style is rather too abstruse and philosophic to permit his being easily read.

Freeman. — A *History of the Norman Conquest* was written by Edward Augustus Freeman and published in 1876. It is a momentous work. It is a most painstaking record, and tolerant and broad in its opinions and points of view. Freeman wrote scores of other works, but none equal to this one. It is said that he thought so little of the principles upon which most historians divided history into periods and epochs that he once remarked that he could never decide whether modern history began with Napoleon the First or with the Call of Abraham.

Green. — John Richard Green was a pupil of Freeman's. He might be said to be a pupil of Macaulay's, too, for he filled the pages of his histories with interesting social and literary matters, as well as with those that were political. The most popular work of its kind that has ever been written is Green's *A Short History of the English People.*

Froude. — James Anthony Froude's *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Destruction of the Spanish Armada*, in twelve volumes, was completed in 1870. It had a tremendous popularity with the general public, but was attacked by many other historians for its inaccuracies. The French specialists

in historical study speak even yet of " Froude's disease " when they refer to a historian who is inaccurate in details. But Froude was a wonderful writer, intensely patriotic, richly endowed with the power to make a historical character appear to be really living, and gifted with the ability, and constantly employing it, to make the reader remember the very words he uses.

American historians. — Of the American historians, William H. Prescott chose the most picturesque subjects, and wrote of them with great charm. *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, *History of the Conquest of Peru*, and *History of the Reign of Philip II*, were his titles. John Lothrop Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic* and his *History of the United Netherlands* are thorough works, filled with intense dramatic interest, though not so artistically constructed as those of Prescott. Francis Parkman has to his credit many histories of rare interest, eight of which are, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, *Pioneers of France in the New World*, *The Jesuits in North America*, *La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West*, *The Old Régime in Canada*, *Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV*, and *A Half-Century of Conflict*. The dates of publication range from 1851 to 1892. *The Oregon Trail*, a volume containing a series of magazine articles concerning travels and adventures among the Indians of the Northwest, preceded all these. *The Old Régime in Canada* is the most thoughtful of Parkman's histories. George Bancroft's work shows a scrupulous investigator and thinker, though not a very attractive narrator. His *History of the United States* in ten volumes comes down no farther than through the Revolution. Two additional volumes, entitled *History of the Formation of the Constitution of the United States*, completed his labors.

III. Prose Fiction

The novel. — The novel presents to its readers personalities in private life more than elsewhere. No quality in the writer of the novel is of greater value than the quality of sympathy. This is the reason so many women have been excellent writers of the novel. It is because sympathy is more fully brought out in the presence of trying situations that the novel does not give as much of all the details of life as it might, but confines itself to those that are best adapted to calling forth the sympathetic resources of the writer and appealing most deeply to the same resources in the reader. Of course, there are a few "novels" that coldly detail insignificant things in the lives of men and women, relating the events with precision and fullness as if the author must be as accurate as a chemist and as complete as an annalist. Such books are often called realistic novels, but they are, more often than not, only sociological studies, having their uses as such studies, but seldom giving the pleasure of an artistic product.[1]

The early Victorian novelists. — Among the earlier of the novelists of the Victorian era was Benjamin Disraeli, who became Lord Beaconsfield, prime minister, and creator of the Queen's authority over Egypt and India. The two ablest of his novels were *Coningsby* and *Sybil*, the first published in 1844, the second in 1845. In them the oriental imagination of the great Jew runs riot. But a much more important work than any of his appeared from the pen of Charlotte Brontë, in 1847, a novel then widely read, and still read with a sense of startled wonder and fascinated interest, even in this twentieth century. This book was named *Jane Eyre*. It is a romantic story, yet

[1] The student should at this point refer to the estimate of the novel by Mrs. Clara Reeve on page 175.

strongly human in the depth and sincerity of the passion it depicts. All readers who are attracted to Charlotte Brontë by this significant work are not equally pleased when they turn to her *Shirley* or to *Villette;* though to one interested in human nature and life and the products of human art, *Villette* appeals as a most interesting and subtle criticism of these things. Charlotte Brontë had two sisters, Anne and Emily, who also were novelists, and poets, too, but they had not her power of insight nor her mastery of expression. George Borrow wrote a volume of travel and autobiography entitled *The Bible in Spain*, which in a unique way tells the story of a colporteur's work in that country. Two of his novels, *Lavengro* and *The Romany Rye*, published in the fifties, are highly imaginative, and are not unlike his book already mentioned, in the constant shifting from vision-land to land of fact. Readers who love the oddities of literature are very enthusiastic over Borrow.

Mid-century names. — Other authors, aside from the three great ones, Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot, whose work centers about the mid-century, were Mrs. Gaskell, Hughes, Blackmore, Collins, Trollope, Dodgson (Carroll), Reade, Kingsley, and Shorthouse. Meredith, Stevenson, and Hardy worked within the later years of the Victorian era, Stevenson dying in 1894. However, before giving some details concerning any of the minor Victorians mentioned above as mid-century writers, we should take up the work of the three great novelists of the time: Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, and George Eliot.

1. *The Great Trio*

Dickens. — Charles Dickens was born in 1812 and died in 1870. One comes close to the facts of his life in the story of *David Copperfield*. His novels began with *Pickwick Papers* in

CHARLES DICKENS

1837, and ended with *Our Mutual Friend* in 1865. Many of them are like those of Smollett in the eighteenth century, in so far as their stories have little plot and in that episodes are inserted whenever it occurs to the author that one might be interesting. He was also like Smollett in his realistic, free-spoken manner, his mixture of comic and tragic, but unlike him in that Dickens was never coarse. Dickens was a past-master at the art of casting a glamor over all characters and all events of which he wrote. No other novelist has so many comic characters to his credit; at least, so many who excite the uncontrolled merriment of his readers. There is no writer, excepting Shakespeare, who has created so many characters whose names are widely known. Not that he creates great characters. Perhaps there is not one in all his books who is great, though there are many readers who think of Sidney Carton, in *A Tale of Two Cities*, as one of the loftiest fictitious characters in prose fiction. Others consider that book as a sentimental melodrama, and the character of Sidney Carton suffers accordingly in their estimation.

To name a small number even of the characters, many of whom are little more than caricatures, in Dickens's great gallery, is unnecessary, for every one who has read him knows them well and intimately. These personages are undying in the memory. Nearly all of them, though, are symbols rather than real individuals. Pecksniff is the hypocrite, Quilp is the cruel man, Jonas Chuzzlewit is the avaricious man, and so on, through the long list of them. In the days of Ben Jonson, avarice and cruelty and hypocrisy would have been written of as "Humours"; in Dickens they are persons in the form of caricatures. Dickens is very affected in his style. This affectation does not limit itself to peculiarities of word or of phrase, but extends itself to large passages, and appears chiefly in those passages which are descriptive. In the passages

which describe "the moaning of the sea, the freaks of the wind, the fluttering of a leaf," or even the death of a child, Dickens is constantly employing what Ruskin described as the "pathetic fallacy," that is, a picturing of a falseness in our impressions of things. Ruskin said that the feeling that leads us to speak of such things as "the cruel crawling foam" is ignoble in so far as there is not cause enough for us to think of it as cruel and crawling, but noble when it is justified by the strength of its cause. The farther we get away from Dickens, it appears more and more that this feeling was not, in all the force with which he expressed it, justified by the facts in relation to the thing described. Hence he seems very affected.

No careful reader of Dickens is likely to agree with any other careful reader of him in naming the chief of his novels. We may venture to say that they are *Pickwick Papers*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Old Curiosity Shop*, *Barnaby Rudge*, *Oliver Twist*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *David Copperfield*, *Dombey and Son*, *Tale of Two Cities*, *Great Expectations*, *Our Mutual Friend*, *Hard Times*, and *Edwin Drood*, the last named being an unfinished book published five years after his death, and affording much rather fruitless discussion as to the final working out of its unfinished plot. Of all these, *Pickwick Papers* has been the most popular, *David Copperfield* the most respected, *A Tale of Two Cities* most acrimoniously discussed, and *Edwin Drood* most interesting to puzzle-hunters. Perhaps *Nicholas Nickleby* has been most enjoyed by young readers. Ruskin thought *Hard Times* the most important of them all, chiefly because of its social insight.

One who can get away from himself in any measure in his reading will secure rich enjoyment from the incessantly humorous depicting of the peculiarities which are common to human beings

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP, LONDON

everywhere, though in Dickens nearly always much exaggerated. Dickens accomplished much for the humanitarian movements which were attracting public interest in England, especially those movements that were associated with the care of children, the reforming of debtors' prisons, the conduct of workhouses, and the administration of schools. It is difficult to speak critically of a writer whose popularity has been so great. Millions of people still love Charles Dickens, and his name will for a long time to come be one "to conjure with."

Thackeray. — William Makepeace Thackeray was born in 1811 and died in 1863. His novels began with *Vanity Fair*, published in 1848, and ended with *The Virginians*, published in 1859, though, like Dickens, he left one unfinished novel, *Denis Duval*, a very interesting fragment. Thackeray's volumes, novels and all, number twenty-six. All are good. He was a great writer. Frederick Harrison says that his "mastery over style — a style at once simple, pure, nervous, flexible, pathetic, and graceful — places Thackeray among the very greatest masters of English prose, and undoubtedly as the most certain and faultless of all the prose writers of the Victorian age." He also says, "I know nothing in English literature more powerful than those last lines of the thirty-second chapter of *Vanity Fair*." Of one scene in this book Harrison says, "There is in all fiction no single scene more vivid, more true, more burnt into the memory, more tragic. And with what noble simplicity, with what incisive reticence, with what subtle anatomy of the human heart, is it recorded." And yet the tragic scenes and the pathetic ones in *Vanity Fair* are no more perfect than those that are charged with humor. We have already called attention to the fact that Walter Pater thought *Henry Esmond* the greatest of all novels. M. Taine said of it, "Thackeray has not written a less popular or a more beautiful book." It is, in

the use of language, almost miraculously artistic; but its greater remoteness from our own times in its subject matter has not gained it the popularity which has been achieved by *Vanity Fair*. Becky Sharp, one of the characters in *Vanity Fair*, is one of the most triumphant creations in modern fiction; and the book has no peer in its kind, taken all in all, unless it be Fielding's *Tom Jones*. It is often said that *Vanity Fair* is a picture of the world. It is not that, any more than " Vanity Fair " in *The Pilgrim's Progress* is the world. It is a picture of that part of the world called " society," and it is a nearly perfect one, though Thackeray is a little one-sided, for, though himself genial and whole-heartedly generous, he presents no characters that are wholly fine-natured. But it was his purpose, by the presentation of the follies and the weaknesses of mankind, thereby to emphasize by contrast those things which were lacking in " society."

Thackeray was a great preacher. But he had his limitations. He died at the age of fifty-two, as Shakespeare did; but while none ever questions that Shakespeare's work was finished, it would seem that Thackeray, had he lived, might have become a more complete master of the human heart and might have, in other words, ceased to offend those who care not to follow a great imagination into the darker sides of life to the exclusion, in very large measure, of the bright. Fielding was Thackeray's master, as Smollett was the master of Dickens. It is difficult to determine whether or not the pupils did not excel their masters. Thackeray was not so good a plot-maker as Fielding, but he was a better stylist, though his employing a better style was due to the general progress in English prose rather than to the finer artistic ability of the individual writer.

Other greatly significant novels by Thackeray, in addition to those already described, were *Pendennis*, *The Newcomes*,

and *The Virginians*. Strong and powerful these are to adults, and even very young readers enjoy them; indeed, often enjoy them more than they do the two greater ones. It should be said here that the student of fiction should acquaint himself with the instructive and entertaining work by Thackeray entitled *The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*. Furthermore, many of his novels are worthy of study for the charm of the letters which he makes his characters write.

George Eliot. — Marian Evans, who assumed the pen-name of George Eliot, was born in 1819 and died in 1880. Of this third writer in the great trio, the famous German critic, Edmond Scherer, said that for her "was reserved the honor of writing the most perfect novels ever known." This is but one of many failures made by critics who are not English when judging the product of the Anglo-Saxon writer. The statement is, of course, exaggerated. But she was a great writer, greater as a writer of prose fiction than any writers in her era were great as poets, excepting Tennyson and Browning, and than any writers of prose were great as essayists, excepting Macaulay, Ruskin, and Carlyle.

Between her earliest work, *Scenes of Clerical Life* (a volume of short narrative sketches or novelettes), and her last novel, *Daniel Deronda*, there is the difference between a spontaneous outburst of self-expression and a labored and mechanical artistry. It is this difference that causes her work to fall into three groups: the first, composed of *Scenes of Clerical Life* and *Adam Bede;* the second, of *The Mill on the Floss* and *Silas Marner;* and the third, of *Romola*, *Felix Holt*, *Middlemarch*, and *Daniel Deronda*.

The novelettes and *Adam Bede* are based upon the writer's own personal experience, and breathe directly her mind and heart. *Adam Bede* has less of herself or her immediate family

within it than has *The Mill on the Floss*, but it is a book which her whole nature impelled her to write. The novels of the second group reveal their author divided between life and art. *The Mill on the Floss* is partly autobiographic. One almost would say that no other book quite so well expresses the yearnings and misgivings which people hardly realize, or at least unwillingly acknowledge, to exist in their lives. In both books of the second group there stands forth the author as an earnest artist striving to do a perfect piece of work. In workmanship, they are almost perfect; but they invite study as pieces of fine craftsmanship and hence are perhaps not so finely artistic as they would be if they could be accepted by one as he accepts the miracle of the snow or the coming of the spring, without analysis, without consciousness of the labor that produced them. The third group is dominated by the workman, rather than by the thinking and feeling woman, or than by the woman plus the workman.

The growth from a kind of lyric expressiveness to rigid artistry was due not alone to the fact that George Eliot desired reputation as an artistic workman, but also to the fact that she desired most strongly to impress herself upon the world as a philosophic moralist. The combination of the desire to be an accomplished artist and the desire to be a great teacher resulted in great books. But they are great in other ways than in the enjoyment they carry to their readers. They are ponderous in their style, noticeably more so as one passes from *Romola* on through *Daniel Deronda;* and they gradually became so weighty with fact that one who may be charmed with the wonderful picture of fifteenth-century Italy in *Romola* is likely, if he be looking for enjoyment, to become wearied before completing those books that follow *Romola.*

It is impossible to find critics agreeing when they discuss the

works of this author. Each one of her novels has been said to be the greatest of them all, with the exception of *Felix Holt*. That book, despite some fine chapters, is uniformly considered of the least consequence of all of them. George Eliot was forty years of age when she wrote *Adam Bede*. This book is strong, therefore, because it is the record of the emotions and thought of its author when they were at their full. *The Mill on the Floss*, even with all its pathos and its humor, is one of the greatest of tragic novels in the language. *Silas Marner* is exquisitely deft in its workmanship, ranking with some of the novels of Jane Austen and of Thomas Hardy as the product of high art. It is quaint and simple, yet rich with power and with that sort of suggestion which comes from the sense the writer imparts of having much more in reserve that she might have said.

George Eliot is said to have read more than three hundred books upon the life and history of the fifteenth century before she ventured to take up the writing of *Romola*. Despite the fact that this book was published in 1863, only two years after *Silas Marner*, George Eliot said, " I began it a young woman —, I finished it an old woman." The historical background, with the great tragic figure of Savonarola standing out boldly upon it, and the enmeshment of Tito with Romola, with Tessa, with Baldasarre, and with the State, make so many-hued and highly complex a story that its appreciation is a test of the culture of the reader. Perhaps the book is too intricate and too erudite. It is its author's greatest *effort*, if not her greatest novel. By 1866 George Eliot was wholly given over to "views" and to the study of problems. In that year *Felix Holt*, the least strong of her novels, was published. *Middlemarch* came next, and is as conspicuous for its artistic defects as *Silas Marner* for its artistic excellence. There can be no doubt of the fact that it was a powerfully philosophic mind which brought forth this

book, but the book is painfully elaborate, even tedious in its almost interminable details. Even so, some have thought it preëminent among her works. *Daniel Deronda* is also a thoughtful and very serious work, but the purpose to which it lent itself, the establishment of a sort of new Judaism, is so artificially developed that the book becomes dry and tiresome even to many of those who glorify the gifted writer of *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss*.

It is quite likely that George Eliot will always hold a place higher in the scale of literature than Charlotte Brontë, but those who set power of insight and charm of simple narrative art above weightiness of material will accord her a place much less high than that of Jane Austen.

2. *Minor Novelists*

When we pass from the notable trio, — Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot — to the minor novelists who were their contemporaries or who followed them, we are by no means taking a seriously downward step. Many of them have, as entertainers, at least, not fallen at all below any one unless it is Dickens, of the supreme three. Mrs. Elizabeth Gaskell, who wrote a biography of Charlotte Brontë, has delighted the gay and the serious alike with her *Cranford*, a pleasing story of village life. Her *Cousin Phyllis* is one of the best of examples of the borderland type between the novel and the short-story, namely, the novelette. Thomas Hughes has inspired succeeding generations of schoolboys with the spirit of Rugby in his *Tom Brown's School-Days*. His *Tom Brown at Oxford* has been only slightly less popular. Richard Blackmore's *Lorna Doone*, published in 1869, is more real to countless youthful readers than nearly all of the actual history which they read. For them no landscape has stronger actuality than that in Blackmore's descriptions of the Doone

country. And, though there is much of false excitement, yet upon the whole the book is most sane and healthful.

Just after the turn of the mid-century came the astonishing stories by Wilkie Collins, — *The Woman in White*, *No Name*, and *The Moonstone*. The last-named is the best of the three. G. K. Chesterton calls it " the best detective tale in the world." It is, however, as are all of Wilkie Collins's works, quite mechanical in the development of its plot. His novels are all "plotted" in a quite literal sense. Nevertheless they are the finest examples of Victorian supernaturalism in fiction. Anthony Trollope is neither so finely naturalistic as Jane Austen nor so coarsely realistic as a number of present-day novelists. He clearly saw individual characters in English life, and he thought it his duty to follow the British prevailing custom to teach morals from their acts. *Barchester Towers* is read more than any other one of his thirty-odd novels. Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking-Glass* are not to be called novels, but are too entertaining to be omitted from an account of nineteenth-century fiction.

Another book which belongs to the middle years of the Victorian era is *John Inglesant* by Joseph Henry Shorthouse, a most thoughtful and intense novel dealing with the Jesuit in England and in Italy during the age of the Stuarts.

Reade, and Kingsley.—Charles Reade and Charles Kingsley are worthy the distinction of being thought of separately from the other minor writers of their time. They may not be read with greater eagerness than those just mentioned, but their works are distinctive for having more of literary quality than can be found among the novels by all their contemporaries in England, excepting the immortal trio to whom we have given the greater space. Both Reade and Kingsley wrote in a manner that was vigorous and vivid, due, in the case of

each of them, to the intrepid energy of their convictions and to the directness with which they saw the life which they set out to describe and narrate.

Charles Reade was roused to anger against the insipidity with which, as he thought, his predecessors and contemporaries were handling the natural impulses of men both as individuals and in their social relationships. He therefore applied his great talent to the remedying of this evil in the world of authorship and in life. *Griffith Gaunt* is a subtle psychological study in the passion of jealousy; *Put Yourself in his Place*, a treatment of trades-unions; *Hard Cash*, of lunatic asylums; and *It's Never Too Late to Mend*, of prison administration. But the novel that stands by itself and far above all others of his, is *The Cloister and the Hearth*, a historical novel into which are woven the results of exhaustive research and painstaking thinking, — and it is a unique and fascinating story. Its hero is the father of Erasmus; the time is the fifteenth century. Even with all its accuracy to the life of that day, the book thrills the reader with its breathless adventures. In preparation for it, Reade is said to have read " whole libraries." His *Peg Woffington* is a delightfully quaint story of stage life, and is the best constructed, from the artistic point of view, of all his novels.

Charles Kingsley was as energetically hostile to the evils of his day as Reade, and even more hopeful of the success of applied remedies. A better life on earth was his watchword; though he had full knowledge that the struggle for it would be long. His novels overflow with eagerness for a kind of muscular Christianity and intelligent socialism. *Alton Locke* and *Yeast* are the novels dealing with social conditions; the first, among the laboring masses in crowded cities, the second, among agricultural laborers. These two books are not much read to-day, partly because they were not well written, partly because

they were rather rash in many of their statements, although written from first-hand information, and partly because they have been superseded by other similar books of life nearer in point of time to us. *Westward Ho!* and *Hypatia*, however, are permanent contributions to the literature of English fiction. *Westward Ho!* is a graphic and stirring account of the buccaneer spirit of the age of Queen Elizabeth, and one of the very best of boys' books, though, historically considered, only "a good, thundering honest lie." *Hypatia* is much more true to the facts of history. It is a historical and philosophical narrative, presenting the sublime death struggle between Greek Paganism and Christianity during the fifth century. Many a reader has thought it the greatest book he has ever read. It has a fascination and a profoundly impressive moving power upon certain individuals that make it a book to be taken into serious account in the making up of a list of the world's greatest books. The world would be better if a Reade and a Kingsley could be born into it every half or three quarters of a century.

3. *A Trio of the Later Years of the Victorian Era*

Stevenson. — Robert Louis Stevenson was born in 1850 and died in 1894, his death coming just within the era we have called that of the Present-day. His name is one we are inclined to speak with reverence. His work is, almost entirely, wholesome, and was produced under conditions that made work a heroic task, for he was in precarious health for years. With a wealth of verse, of novels, short-stories, and most charming essays left behind him, he died, as the above dates indicate, at the age of forty-four. Stevenson could not write of physical adventures in what Sir Walter Scott called "the bow-wow

strain," nor was he a profound psychologist; yet he succeeded well at adventures and at analysis of man's inner life. Furthermore, though he suffered greatly from illness, he sturdily urged in the life of man a fighting optimism and a sound-minded humor. He loved adventure as intensely as the most romantic-minded boy or girl, though physical adventure was denied to him. In what a realist would see as the most humdrum characters, he would imagine the most magic of all possibilities. In *Treasure Island* he wrote the best boys' book since *Midshipman Easy*. All together he was the most interesting, though not the most able, of the writers whose lives fell within the last half of the nineteenth century. If he has any weaknesses, they are but two: a lack of breadth in the range of his sympathies and a tendency to crowd his stories together rather than to let them develop in an orderly manner to a logical conclusion, — the one a defect of nature, the other a defect of art. During his own lifetime his critical friends were divided in their desires for him, some urging him to devote himself exclusively to story-telling, others to devote himself with equal exclusiveness to essay-writing. That he went his own way and did both, his friends of the twentieth century, critical and uncritical, are grateful. *Tusitala*, or " teller of tales," however, was the name given him by the natives of Samoa, among whom his last days were spent. A beautiful *Requiem* which he wrote is now engraved upon his tomb, —

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
  And I laid me down with a will.
This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be!
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
  And the hunter home from the hill.

Stevenson was a charming and stimulating essayist, and a great short-story writer. The features of his work in these lines will be discussed later in this chapter. He was not a great novelist, although had *Weir of Hermiston* been finished as he had planned, that book might have required us to call him one of the foremost novel writers of his century. His power of character creation seemed in *Weir of Hermiston* to have risen as high as that of Dickens or Thackeray; but he died before the book could be finished. His completed novels are *Treasure Island*, a master boy's book of adventure, though for some squeamish adults a trifle too much given to the shedding of blood; *Kidnapped; The Master of Ballantrae;* and *David Balfour;* all of them excellent in their character portrayal, but chiefly to be thought of as stories of tense and exciting adventure.

Meredith. — The first of George Meredith's books which can be called a novel appeared in 1859. It was *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel.* Up to and including the year 1890 he published ten other novels: *Evan Harrington, Sandra Belloni, Vittoria, Harry Richmond, Rhoda Fleming, Beauchamp's Career, The Egoist, The Tragic Comedians, Diana of the Crossways,* and *One of Our Conquerors.* Of these ten none has had so many readers as *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel.* The best known of the ten are *Rhoda Fleming, Beauchamp's Career, The Egoist,* and *Diana of the Crossways.* We say " the best known," for Meredith has shut himself out from the following of the so-called popular reader by a whimsicality in the use of the English language which is more trying to the untrained reader than the whimsicalities of Carlyle or of Browning. This whimsy consists not only in his love of putting both the conversation of his characters and his own explanatory sentence in the forms of aphorism and maxim, but it often consists also of elliptical

allusions and wire-drawn allegories which only a trained and rather leisurely reader can make intelligible to himself. Nevertheless, Meredith was the keenest analyzer of the invisible life, in other words the greatest psychologist, who wrote fiction in the nineteenth century. His mission was to war unremittingly against sentimentalism in conventional society. And yet while he certainly does pillory the sentimentalities of men and women, of boys and girls, too, he is never flippant. Reality he calls "Sacred"; and it is real beauty, real greatness, real religion that he constantly exalts, and urges that in them mankind should place its unending faith.

Meredith has been able to mirror all men in at least one of his novels. No human being can carefully and thoughtfully read *The Egoist* without finding something of himself or herself there. It is his most subtle work.

The Ordeal of Richard Feverel is, more than anything else, a scathing condemnation of the conventional ideas and methods by which the young are commonly brought up, with all of the flying in the face of nature which that bringing-up involves. Few, perhaps no persons, have ever taken nature more naturally than has Meredith. There are in this book several of the best scenes in all fiction; one of them Stevenson believed to be the best in the English language since Shakespeare.

Meredith has said some great things, a large number of them taken from what in *Richard Feverel* he calls "The Pilgrim's Script." It was a superb thing in the skeptical age of the late Victorian era to have said, "Expediency is man's wisdom. Doing right is God's." Other sayings were, "You talk of Fate! It's the seed we sow individually or collectively," "Fools . . . run jabbering of the irony of fate to escape the annoyance of tracing the causes," and "Who rises from prayer a better man, his prayer is answered."

Hardy. — There is a very great difference between George Meredith and Thomas Hardy. To Meredith there is as much of saving power in nature and the healthy natural life of man as there was to Wordsworth; but to Hardy nature is a power that is always entering in for no purpose but to betray and ruin man. Hardy is a realist, and a very thoughtful one, with the material he chooses to write about among the very actual things of human life. But the real things he chooses to write about are nearly all from the actions of one " class " in life, the class called the peasantry. Hardy refuses to write of and show up the defects of conventional life as does Meredith; but he chooses to go to the life which is lived naturally, that of the peasant in England. He thinks that he can find real character there better than elsewhere, unthwarted in its action by artificial thought. But, filled as his mind is with the pessimism of Schopenhauer and the Russian writers, he finds that character is thwarted by defective natural laws, by chance, and by the hopeless and somber moods of nature. Through most of his days Hardy has written of man as if he were without hope, though lately there has been some mellowing of this despairing tone.

If one will read *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, *The Return of the Native*, and *Tess of the D' Urbervilles* (all three written, along with ten other volumes, before 1892) for their stories alone, although he will find in Hardy a rather sad humorist, yet he will also be certain to relish keenly the fine story-telling and the accurate and dramatic picture-making.

4. *The Novel in America*

American novelists prior to 1890. — At least six American novelists of importance and high worth busied themselves during the period from 1837 to 1890 in the production of fiction which

seems destined to survive the acid test of time: Nathaniel Hawthorne, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, and Henry James. Hawthorne wrote several novels, of which three are of superior quality. *The Scarlet Letter* is the masterpiece among them, *The House of the Seven Gables* has delighted even greater numbers, and *The Marble Faun*, besides being a good story, is a rich contribution to the study of the art and life of Italy. Mrs. Stowe is world-famed as the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, though her *Old Town Folks* and *The Minister's Wooing* do not suffer from its inartistic crudities, and in generations to come they may be more widely read than it will be. Dr. Holmes's *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* and *The Poet at the Breakfast Table* would better be named " essay-novels " than novels. They are the table-talk of a shrewd and humorous observer of life. Three other books, more truly novels, and two of them, — *Elsie Venner* and *The Guardian Angel*, — really good, came from the pen of this genial satirist. Both of these are slightly abnormal in the nature of their subject matter, " medicated novels " they have been called. Samuel Langhorne Clemens, who assumed the pen-name of Mark Twain, was the leading humorist which America has produced. It is doubtful whether his books with other purposes than to be spontaneously humorous will ever supplant either in popular or critical esteem *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*. Of the second of these he said, " Anybody who seeks a moral in this story will be shot."

William Dean Howells has deliberately chosen to write of the commonplace in life, though it is easy enough for any one to find in one's own life much more of the commonplace than Mr. Howells has dared to put into his books. It is not unselected facts which he has woven into his novels. If one should under-

take to name the best among his " realistic " novels, he would find it difficult to get any other person to agree with him, so that one would better only say that representative of his labors are: *Their Wedding Journey*, *A Foregone Conclusion*, *The Lady of the Aroostook*, *A Modern Instance*, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, *The Minister's Charge*, *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, and *A Boy's Town*. Henry James followed Maria Edgeworth in the writing of the so-called international novel, that is, the novel portraying characters abroad in foreign countries. He seems to be interested more in idle Americans in Europe than in any other sort of characters. His novels have not yet reached as wide a group of readers as have his short-stories, his style being too finely analytical to permit the reader, in many instances, to go far in reading him without being wearied. Among his numerous novels are *The American*, *The Europeans*, *Daisy Miller*, *The Portrait of a Lady*, *The Bostonians*, and *The Princess Casamissima*. American novels during this period range in date from 1850 (*The Scarlet Letter*) to 1890 (*A Boy's Town*).

5. *The Short-story*

The short-story writers. — Subsidiary to the large pattern of life which we call the novel comes the short-story. Henry Kingsley, Dr. John Brown, Wilkie Collins, Bulwer Lytton, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, and Stevenson in England, and Hawthorne, Poe, Bret Harte, Edward Everett Hale, James, Aldrich, Mark Twain, Bunner, Cable, Stockton, Mrs. Freeman in America, — the list is long, and it is difficult to say where it should end. Of these, one, Henry James, survived into 1915, Stevenson lived until 1894, and a few of the Americans wrote past 1890.

No student of the short-story can afford to miss reading

Henry Kingsley's *Our Brown Passenger*, Dr. John Brown's *Rab and his Friends*, Wilkie Collins's *A Terribly Strange Bed*, Bulwer Lytton's *The House and the Brain*, Dickens's *The Signal Man*, Thackeray's *Dennis Haggerty's Wife*, and George Eliot's *Amos Barton*, though the stories of Thackeray and George Eliot are tales or condensed novels or novelettes rather than short-stories, in the strictly technical sense of the term.

Stevenson. — The short-stories of Robert Louis Stevenson will not admit of mere cataloguing along with a list of others. Bred upon English literature, Scotch blood in his veins, in love with the French method of writing, Hawthornesque in the moral issue which he almost invariably makes the kernel of his story, much should be required of him, and much he gives. *A Lodging for the Night*, *Will o' the Mill*, and *The Sire de Maletroit's Door*, were published within four months of each other, in the fall and winter of 1877–1878, and it was evident then that there was one Englishman with a pliant style and a strength of inventive power which assured all readers of fiction that something new under the sun was being done or about to be done for them. *The Merry Men*, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *Markheim* deepened the impression with many, and assured many more that the impression found justification in the truth itself. *A Lodging for the Night* restores a character and an environment to a place from which they will never again be dislodged. *Will o' the Mill* is the best brief biography in all fiction. *The Sire de Maletroit's Door* has no superior in modern romantic short-story literature. *The Merry Men* carries with it the impression of setting which its author felt, in a manner that is little short of perfect. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is an irresistibly impressive detective romance, from whose moral point no reader ever escapes. *Markheim* is most excellent in workmanship, though generally over-

estimated in the psychology of its subject matter. To these should be added *The Bottle Imp*, a South Sea version of an old German tale, and a story true to all points of the variable compass of human nature. Fresh and natural, this story is, despite the continental ancestry which is evident in it. Stevenson must be awarded the laurel crown when search is made for the one who, best of all, can with *genial charm* make the most that can be made of an incident or a situation within the bounds of the short-story.

The American short-story. — The short-story, in its modern methods, is a product of American artistry rather than of that of any other nation. With the exception chiefly of the work of Auerbach and Storm, Germany has produced tales, not short-stories. France, Russia, and England have had adepts at the short-story, but none of them, nor any even of the French, has equaled, much less excelled, the work in this field done by Hawthorne, Poe, Bret Harte, and James. Aldrich's *Marjorie Daw* is exquisite, the best story in its own peculiar form. Mark Twain's *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* is most irresistibly funny. Stockton's *The Lady or the Tiger* has no peer in the realm of unsolved problem. H. C. Bunner's *A Sisterly Scheme* has never failed to charm every reader who has perused it, — a fact it would be hard to find true of any other short-story. George W. Cable's local situation stories are among the best sketchy views of unusual life. Edward Everett Hale's *The Man Without a Country* will never be forgotten so long as the sentiment of patriotism remains a power within the human breast. Yet none of these stories, distinctive as each is, can be said to be on a par with the best work of the other four Americans, Hawthorne, Poe, Bret Harte, and James.

Hawthorne was the psychologist. Among his many stories, *Ethan Brand*, *The Great Stone Face*, *The Hollow between Three Hills*, and *The White Old Maid* are typical. Poe was the plot-

maker. *Berenice*, *Ligeia*, *The Pit and the Pendulum*, *The Masque of the Red Death*, and *The Fall of the House of Usher*, gruesome as they are, still are the best-planned stories in the whole realm of short-story writing. Henry James is a psychologist, too, but not one who plumbs the hitherto untouched depths as did Hawthorne. He has taken the more simple situations, as compared with those elaborated by Hawthorne, in the life of human beings, and analyzed them into copious, almost infinite, detail. One who wishes to examine the subtle and sinuous windings of the human mind amid situations that are not, as a rule, quite unusual, may do so in the writings of Henry James. In 1915 James became a British citizen, after having resided in England for forty years. Bret Harte is everywhere recognized as the first master of stories of so-called local color, that is to say, stories which take their tone from the surroundings of the characters. Doubtless it is not true that the characters and the incidents and even the physical environment in the California stories are as they were in reality; but they distinctly give the impression that they are, which is the most positive proof of the skill of the author. In such stories as *Tennessee's Partner*, *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, and especially *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, character, incident, and mental and physical situation all blend into one harmonious and convincing whole. These writers are deserving of more space in consideration, but our interest here is primarily with literature in Great Britain and but incidentally with that of America.

IV. Criticism

Macaulay. — Macaulay's *Critical and Historical Essays* were collected and printed in 1843. The important ones written before 1837 we have already mentioned on pages 242–4. Macaulay

was a man of wonderful memory, hence his knowledge was great. This, together with his instinct for historical illustration and for constructing sentences that were always unmistakably clear, made his essays highly effective. He is still the most popular, the most widely read, of any prose author in English literary history, with the exception of some of the novelists. He is sometimes accused of being superficial, but there is still room for much of clear and positive writing about even the surface matters of human life, and Macaulay is greatly to be commended for making so clear the values of ordinary things. He was a strongly practical moralist, and it is only because the philosophers of most nations have too much neglected that part of practical philosophy which is known as morality that Macaulay is so frequently accused of being superficial. M. Taine has said, " Macaulay brings to the moral sciences that spirit of circumspection, that desire for certainty, and that instinct for truth, which make up the practical mind, and which from the time of Bacon have constituted the scientific merit and power of his nation."

Furthermore, if style can be said to be adequate expression of the author's whole meaning, then Macaulay had style. Macaulay had a superb faculty for explanation and proof, and, while he did not write the impassioned prose of De Quincey, yet his expositions move us more than those of De Quincey do, for their content is that of fact and truth, while De Quincey wrote chiefly of merely fanciful matters. Yet Macaulay could movingly employ the imaginative, as many a passage in his essays proves. The following one is from the Essay on *Milton:*

Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed.

But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her, accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and glory!

Macaulay was a very modern man. He believed the object of knowledge not to be theory, but application. In his *Essay on Bacon*, the man from whom genuine science, according to Macaulay, began to date, he says that "the philosophy of the ancients produced fine writings, sublime phrases, infinite disputes, hollow dreams, systems displaced by systems, and left the world as ignorant, as unhappy, and as wicked as it found it." But the philosophy of Bacon

has lengthened life; it has mitigated pain; it has extinguished disease; it has increased the fertility of the soil; it has given new securities to the mariner; it has furnished new arms to the warrior; it has spanned great rivers and estuaries with bridges of form unknown to our fathers; it has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from heaven to earth; it has lighted up the night with the splendours of the day; it has extended the range of human vision; it has multiplied the power of the human muscles; it has accelerated motion; it has annihilated distance; it has facilitated intercourse, correspondence, all friendly offices, all despatch of business; it has enabled man to descend to the depths of the sea, to soar into the air, to penetrate securely into the noxious recesses of the earth, to traverse the land in cars which whirl along without horses, and the ocean in ships which run ten knots an hour against the wind.

From this point on Macaulay proceeds to take an ancient Stoic and a Baconian into places of stress and difficulty, and by various brilliant illustrations shows the difference between

the philosophy of thorns and the philosophy of fruit, the philosophy of words and the philosophy of works. However much one may think that Macaulay unworthily depreciates the value of speculative philosophy, yet one must admit that he thoroughly represents the positive and practical English national genius.

It is an ungrateful task to choose the best of his essays, but one may tentatively suggest those on *Milton*, *Southey*, *Pitt*, *Chatham*, *Clive*, *Hastings*, *Madame D'Arblay*, *Boswell*; *Hallam*, *Frederick the Great*, and *Ranke*, as among the best.

Carlyle. — In temperament, in life, and in manner of writing, Thomas Carlyle is in strong contrast with Macaulay. Macaulay is calm and relatively unimaginative, Carlyle is always disturbed in heart and mind, with fiery and tumultuous imagination; Macaulay is a politician and a man of affairs, Carlyle is a recluse; Macaulay is positive, direct, saying all he means and no more, in every sentence that he utters, Carlyle achieves his powerful effects by suggestion, extravagance, and violence. All life to Macaulay is as clear as noon-day sunshine; Carlyle never looks upon life except through the medium of brilliant or gloomy visions.

Carlyle may be quite thoroughly known through the reading of three books: (1) *Sartor Resartus*, (2) *Past and Present*, and (3) *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*. In the last of these, myth-god, prophet, poet, priest, man of letters, and king are the heroes in man's history. Odin; Mahomet; Dante and Shakespeare; Luther and Knox; Johnson, Burns, and Rousseau; and Cromwell and Napoleon, are the characters representing the heroic qualities which Carlyle thinks worthy the adoration of the thinking and doing man. In this book Carlyle for the time being abandoned his fantastic and puzzle-ridden style for simple, straightforward subject-predicate form of statement, with very little forcing of the

reader to the dictionary for the meaning of the most uncommon words in or out of the language.

Past and Present, also, is easily readable in one's quietest mood. It is a comparison of England in the medieval days with England in his own time, to the discredit of the latter. In medieval England men were divided, as Carlyle thought they should be, into leaders and the led; and thus, he insisted, it should always be that the wise and the gifted should be foremost and should be welcomed as foremost among men. The motive of the book is very like that of *Heroes and Hero-Worship*.

Heroes and Hero-Worship may well be called a book of essays, though its contents were first delivered as lectures. *Past and Present* is not strictly a group of essays, for through it runs a sort of story of the old Abbey of St. Edmund's Bury, and yet each chapter of the book may be read as a unit in itself and thoroughly enjoyed as such. *Sartor Resartus* (1834) also is not strictly a series of essays, though each chapter has a theme almost as separate from that of every other as would be found in a volume of essays by Macaulay.

"Sartor Resartus" means The Tailor Repatched. The book is a sort of "clothes-philosophy." It pretends to be a translation of a German work which Carlyle had found (and upon which he furnishes a running commentary), originally written by a professor in the University of Weissnichtwo (No-Man-Knows-Where). Clothes are considered, not as the symbols of what is beneath them, but as symbols of what, in conventional mind and society life, we wrap about ourselves, — words, customs, institutions, and so on. Carlyle endeavors to strip away from man all these concealments and to reveal man as he is:

> To the eye of vulgar Logic, what is man? An omnivorous Biped that wears Breeches. To the eye of Pure Reason, what is he? A Soul, a

Spirit, and divine Apparition. Round his mysterious ME, there lies, under all those wool-rags, a Garment of Flesh (or of Senses) Contextured in the Loom of Heaven; Whereby he is revealed to his like, and dwells with them in UNION and DIVISION; and sees and fashions for himself a Universe, with azure Starry Spaces, and long Thousands of Years. Deep-hidden is he under that strange Garment; amid Sounds and Colours and Forms, as it were, swathed-in, and inextricably over-shrouded; yet it is sky-woven and worthy of a God.

To-day much of the effect which Carlyle gained at the time of writing is lost by absurd over-capitalization. One wants never to quote without modernizing a little; though, from the literary-historical point of view, that would be misleading.

In the chapter on "Natural Supernaturalism" in *Sartor Resartus*, Carlyle says that "Thought without Reverence is barren, perhaps poisonous." But when once one had thought and had looked with reverence

Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grassblade, and most through every Living-Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. . . .

Generation after generation takes to itself the form of a Body; and forth-issuing from Cimmerian Night, on Heaven's mission APPEARS. What Force and Fire is in each he expends; one grinding in the mill of Industry; one, hunter-like, climbing the giddy Alpine heights of Science; one madly dashed in pieces on the rocks of Strife, in war with his fellow; — and the Heaven-sent is recalled; his earthly Vesture falls away, and soon even to Sense becomes a vanished Shadow. Thus, like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven's Artillery, does this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long-drawn, quick succeeding grandeur, through the unknown Deep. Thus, like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth, then plunge again into the Inane. . . . But whence? O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God.

Carlyle's mission was to make men think and feel deeply; and, while not so large a number of people have read him as have read Macaulay and the novelists, yet no man in his day succeeded more fully than Carlyle in accomplishing that mission of making men both think and feel deeply.

J. S. Mill. — John Stuart Mill, known in the history of philosophy and of science for his *System of Logic* and his *Political Economy*, came within the confines of literature, to remain there, by his essays on *Liberty* and on *The Subjection of Women*. He was a cautious thinker, clear in statement, and, in these two essays, fervid in conviction and in persuasive power.

Arnold. — Matthew Arnold, a man of sensitive temperament, delicacy of mind, and fineness of literary impulse and taste, gave himself up for many years to the laborious and self-sacrificing task of inspector of schools, even to the extent of daily reading and marking hundreds of papers in elementary mathematics and grammar. He also held the most coveted chair in English Universities, that of Poetry at Oxford. Further, with greatest patience and thoroughness, he visited and reported upon the educational institutions of France and Germany. Amid this exhaustive and wearisome work he became a poet of prominence and an essayist second only to Macaulay, Carlyle, and Ruskin. He was self-sacrificing, saying " Whether one lives long or not, to be less and less *personal* in one's desires and workings is the great matter." He was also ambitious and courageous, for he said, and lived according to the saying, " However, one cannot change English ideas as much as, if I live, I hope to change them, without saying imperturbably what one thinks, and making a good many people uncomfortable." Arnold is believed by many to have been unsympathetic, though kindly in that lack of sympathy. But some appear to find even in this kindliness an air of superciliousness. Others think this apparent super-

ciliousness (which some always attribute to a conscious expression of the cultured mind) to be really an intense moral earnestness and an over-conscientious anxiety to be conciliatory.

Arnold's style is very formally correct, but it is richly rhythmical, always sharp in its effect, and, perhaps, a little too anxious to be understood at all points. This anxiety to be understood led Arnold into a habit of repetition of the main thought in almost identical phrase, on the theory, some one has said, that "What I tell you three times is true," which habit to some is an objectionable mannerism, to others a grateful relief because it enables them to carry forward with them the chief topic and idea without constant strain to the memory.

More than Macaulay and than Carlyle, Arnold was a literary critic, a critic not directly of life so much as indirectly of life through the interpretation and dissemination of the best literature. He said that the function of criticism is to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world. He made it evident to every one that "criticism" did not mean adverse comment so much as appreciation.

In 1865 nine of his essays were collected into one volume, entitled *Essays in Criticism.* This and three other groups of essays, under the titles of *Mixed Essays*, Second Series of *Essays in Criticism*, and a volume of *Discourses in America*, contain his best work. A comparison of his essay on "Democracy" with that of Lowell upon the same subject makes a most interesting study. However much difference of attitude there may be towards Arnold among his readers, *most* of them find him delightfully stimulating. Perhaps his purpose and what he accomplished can be no better expressed than in a statement in the preface to his first volume of essays, that he is trying "to pull out a few more stops in that powerful, but at present somewhat narrow-toned organ, the modern Englishman." Or, to

put his purpose, if not his achievement, in still other words of his, he strove to intensify in England " the impulse to the development of the whole man, to connecting and harmonizing all parts of him, perfecting all, leaving none to take its chance."

Jefferies. — *The Story of My Heart* is the title of a book which is sure to be of permanent interest to thoughtful readers. It is not a " sentimental " book, however, despite its title. While not entirely clear, and sometimes somewhat gloomy, yet it is an expression, in a manner doubtless as clear as possible, of the vaguer moods which beset all of us and for which we all desire to find some outlet. Its author is John Richard Jefferies. The book was published in 1883, four years before its author's death. Not only was Jefferies a medium for sturdy expression of what is, possibly, a trifle over-sentimental in most lovers of the things which make the subject matter of literature, but he was the most accurate and vivid of the minute describers of out-of-door nature in its more delicate appeal to the human mind and heart. An eighteenth-century man, Gilbert White, in 1789 had published a *Natural History of Selbourne*, and the poets of England centering about the beginning of the nineteenth century, and Thoreau in America, had endeavored to come close to nature and to record vividly what they found there. But Jefferies in his *The Game-Keeper at Home* and *The Life of the Fields* equaled any of them and surpassed most, both in accuracy of observation and in picturesque vividness in conveying to his reader what he had so accurately observed. For a reader who is inclined to find in nature mere " things," Jefferies is the best sort of tonic, for he will help that reader to spiritual insight.

Newman. — John Henry Newman stands by himself as a writer who combines uncompromising force and unshaken conviction with the most familiar colloquial manner of discourse.

So subtle and flexible was his intellect that he could say " Reasoning, or the exercise of reason, is a living, spontaneous energy within us, not an art," and yet he never failed to meet the requirements of logical method and exhaustive thoroughness of treatment. So perfectly poised, so affable, so luminous is the intellectual atmosphere with which he surrounds himself, so far-ranging in reach of illustration is he, so thorough his grasp upon social facts and human impulses and motives, that every one finds him easy to read; and even those who will not accept what he says as truth in its application are yet charmed out of themselves, particularly when they face the parts of his writing that, with all their subtle irony, are openly reflective of his finely noble spirit, — and that is almost every part.

Newman's style was like that of the best French writers, very flexible, very clear, unemphatic, suave, gently ironic. It is musical, and thus, in a way, attunes the mind of the reader to that of the writer. If it has faults, they are those of excess of color and a slight redundancy. It may be said of Newman that he has in a most exceptional manner aided to make the English language pure. While there was much of impassioned struggle, there was none of the " impassioned prose " in his writings such as in those of De Quincey, for it was not the magniloquent, nor even the magnificent that he strove for, but the clearness and simplicity of the accomplished scholar. This it was which made him attractive, and powerful, also.

One will go far afield and return again without finding a writer in whom the interdependence of life of the times, life of himself, and his writings is more marked and evident. He lived first almost exclusively in the academic atmosphere, then in the more purely ecclesiastical atmosphere, becoming finally a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church. From 1830 until 1870, at least, there raged much controversy in the Anglican

church over tendencies towards Roman Catholic practices and beliefs, — they have not yet ceased, indeed. Newman very gradually passed from extreme views, such as that the Pope was Antichrist, through a *Via Media* to reception into the Roman communion. All of this is explained in his *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (Apology for his own life), published in 1864, showing fully the mystic, subtle, imaginative spirit of the author. The book, fervid and sincere as it is, failed, nevertheless, to carry his friends in great numbers with him. Most of them felt that all his brilliant logic failed to found itself upon sound reason. They believed that there was something evasive in such assertions as that "Scripture says the earth is stationary and the sun moves: science, that the sun is stationary and that the earth moves; and we shall never know which is true until we know what *motion* is." The volume entitled *Idea of a University* contains the best of his expressions upon education, literature, and the like, and has been profound in its influence upon thoughtful readers.

In poetry Cardinal Newman's name has become world-famed, for his *Dream of Gerontius* has been set to oratorio music by Elgar and rendered everywhere. Also, he wrote one of the best religious hymns in English, "Lead, Kindly Light." This hymn reflects perfectly the condition of his mind while considering the change of doctrine which he was lingering over. Newman died in 1890.

Pater. — It is a fashion much affected by the smart journalist, gently or rudely, according to his temperament, to ridicule the influence of Walter Pater upon the academic and artistically inclined mind. He rarely ridicules the style or the thought of Pater directly, for he seldom has read him. Perhaps the writer of the too frequently structureless newspaper article feels too keenly the indirect criticism upon him in

Pater's often quoted statement that " In literary as in all other art, structure is all-important, felt, or painfully missed, everywhere — that architectural conception of work which foresees the end in the beginning and never loses sight of it, and in every part is conscious of all the rest, till the last sentence does but, with undiminished vigor, unfold and justify the first — a condition of literary art which . . . I shall call the necessity of *mind* in style." There is no doubt that Pater has refined his thought at times beyond the power of the hurried reader to follow. However, to one who will read with care, his fullness of thought and ripeness of suggestion are not only most engaging but most illuminating as well. And while it is true that his thought is ramified and refined into remote corners and into unobvious meanings, yet it is never empty, but full and stately as the style in which it is reproduced. The attempts of some of his admirers to imitate the beauty of his English have resulted in disaster to them; for the careful building up of each part of his discourse, part and whole being equally held in mind, rhythm artfully schemed, and vocabulary sifted down to the apt but inevitable word, is entirely beyond their power to master. The strange effect which he has gained by all this avoidance of what is worn and obvious has resulted in mere bizarrerie when handled by the imitator.

But the greatest influence of Pater is not in and through the wonder of his style. It is in the aim to which he devoted himself and in what he achieved of a life philosophy in the carrying out of that aim. It was his aim to secure from literature, and from all art, " the quickened sense of life." While he may have excluded other things of value in his consideration of the things from which this understanding and this pleasure of life may be extracted, yet the net result is that he has succeeded in firmly placing literary and other art upon a high level in relation to

their effect upon life, from which level to a lower one they can never be removed. It is in his *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873) and, later, in *Appreciations* that his finest thinking was done. In critical prose he is even a more wonderful craftsman than Stevenson in his narrative prose. As skilled a craftsman in prose as Tennyson was in verse.

Ruskin. — Of the greater critical writers, there remains John Ruskin, the treatment of whom we have reserved to this point, since he came so near living to be contemporary with the youth of to-day. He was born in 1819 and died in 1900. J. M. Whistler, who was not his friend, called him "Master of English Literature." Undoubtedly Ruskin was preëminently the master of all the known resources of English prose. The romantic vigor of Sir Walter Scott, the reverential tone of Wordsworth, the sensitiveness of Shelley, the accuracy of the greatest scientists, the ornate wealth of diction and phrase of Hooker, the frequently grotesque forcefulness of Carlyle, the music of the King James Version of the Bible, — all these and, seemingly, all else that could be added unto these, gathered themselves into the writings of this one man who had the keenest and surest power of discriminating observation, the most unconventional points of view, and the most solidly based and yet richly rapturous visions for man's life of any writer in the whole long twelve hundred years of English literature.

Macaulay, Carlyle, Arnold, and Newman had devoted themselves to the criticism of human society and to the one product of art known as literature; Pater had reached deliberately and fully into the realm of the fine arts generally; Ruskin divided his great powers between art and nature, tirelessly devoting all those powers to the making of man wiser, better, nobler. He was as energetic in his demands for work as was Carlyle. "Life without industry is guilt," he said. But he was as

anxious that man should be a producer and lover of art as ever Pater could be. "Industry without art is brutality," he said.

Ruskin wrote as many as eighty books, — all of them intended to be for the good of man. From the essay on *The Poetry of Architecture*, written at the age of eighteen, to the letter on *Icelandic Industries*, written at the age of seventy-one, he devoted himself to principle, — to no principle more eagerly or more strenuously than to the one that the appreciation of beauty in art and in nature goes hand in hand with true progress in every line of human life. It was his faithfulness to principle which has resulted in a popularity which no other critic of art in the world's history has attained. If Ruskin ever failed to illustrate fidelity to principle, it was because failure is characteristic of humanity. It was never because of conscious inconsistency nor from mixed motives. And the truth is that he never failed except in unimportant points.

He was the arbiter of Anglo-Saxon taste for half a century. *Punch* published the wail of a Royal Academy artist, —

I paints and paints,
Hears no complaints,
And sells before I'm dry;
Till Savage Ruskin
Sticks his tusk in
And nobody will buy.

Modern Painters and the Oxford *Lectures on Art* were his leading works in the field of criticism of painting. In domestic architecture he made England over. Whole villages and even cities have been transformed because Ruskin scolded and taught. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *Stones of Venice* contain his chief utterances upon the art of architecture.

"We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love," a line from Wordsworth, was a favorite one upon his lips, and for the cultivation of the feeling of admiration or wonder, of hope or aspiration, and of human and heavenly love he constantly was pleading; yet it was the immense knowledge which he possessed and the clear significance of that knowledge to him which led him to plead even more for a right understanding of the phenomena and the principles, first of art, then of nature, then of the relations of human life. This was the order, art, nature, human life, in which these interests dominated his life work. But it was political economy to which he gave the greater share of his later years of labor; and while in his own time he was considered a curious theorist, talking apart from the main issue in political economy, — the acquiring of wealth, — yet to-day his teachings are the predominant ones at the points where the true interests of human society are considered by the political economist. "There is no wealth but Life — Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration," was the teaching of the volume of essays called *Unto this Last.*

Minor works of great beauty and charm were *The Ethics of the Dust, The Crown of Wild Olive, Sesame and Lilies,* and *Harbours of England.* Ruskin was also the author of one of the greatest of fairy stories, *The King of the Golden River,* printed in 1854, though written much earlier.

John Ruskin was a great optimist. In the face of much to disconcert him, he even believed in the beneficence of the processes of nature in all respects. He was not, though, at all times a genial optimist. A great humorist, yet at times he was the grimmest of all Britons. He was unfailingly biographic in all of his writings; in art, in nature, in political economy, always centering his discussions about men and their efforts, — men of vital power, energy, and sincerity. He taught more and

better things than any other man of his century; and Mazzini, the great Italian patriot, said of him that he had the most analytic mind in all Europe. With all of this, it passes without saying with emphasis to-day that he was a marvelous stylist. If his style has any fault, it is that his sentences are not infrequently too long for the uninspired reader to grasp them as units. And yet the length of his sentences made possible his chief instrument, — the chief instrument of all great styles, namely, rhythm. But his rhythm was so far developed that it would become almost blank verse, if it were in sentences that were briefer than his.

The work of Ruskin has been a benediction to the world. To read carefully all his books would be a liberal education.

Stevenson. — Among the lesser critical essayists, Stevenson may be taken as representative. *Virginibus Puerisque*, 1881, and, in the following year, *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*, came from his pen, and are his chief volumes of critical value. In both of these he is decidedly original. If one will read "An Apology for Idlers," in the first of these volumes, he will have an excellent example of the winning manner of Stevenson. It is one of the many essays in which the author develops a favorite and fundamental idea, — that one ought to get as much enjoyment out of life as is possible. The charming spirit of his essays fills his verse also. The child not familiar with his *A Child's Garden of Verses* has been neglected, or has himself somehow neglected his opportunities. But this book is not, after all, the foremost representative of his poetry. He was not a great poet, but such a poem as *The Woodman* shows that he was at least an undeveloped second-class poet.

The critical essay in America. — Only a paragraph can be given here to American essayists, though three of them are of highest importance. Emerson, Thoreau, and Lowell were the

three all-important essayists in America during the Victorian era. Emerson's essays are filled with immemorial culture and with flashes of poetic and philosophic insight such as no other unsystematic thinker has ever had. In 1837 he delivered the address before the Phi Beta Kappa society at Cambridge on the subject of *The American Scholar*. Oliver Wendell Holmes called the address "our intellectual Declaration of Independence." Emerson's first volume of *Essays* came from the press in 1841, a second volume in 1844. The essays on *History, Compensation, Heroism, Self-Reliance, The Over-Soul, Character, Manners,* have entered into the thought of the American people, and of many other people, in almost every detail of them. Thoreau was a lesser Emerson, with a difference. The difference lies in the fact that he was much more an out-of-door man. Perhaps it lies partly, too, in another fact, — that he was a much better writer. His *Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers* and his *Walden, or Life in the Woods*, are famous, and deservedly so, for they have delighted and stimulated thousands of readers who have received from Thoreau their first introduction to nature as something more than mere out-of-doors or than a convenient mechanism for supplying our physical needs and disciplining our temper. Lowell's essays are both literary-critical and political, the former being usually reviews of other men's works, and in some cases turning out to be better than the things reviewed. His political essays will always be read by lovers of good English, and they will always be a mine for the politician who desires to say appealing and yet sensible things to his constituents. Lowell's *A Good Word for Winter* and *On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners* and *Cambridge Thirty Years Ago* fall outside both of these groups of critical and political essays. But they are indescribably entertaining.

V. Science

Five men of science in this period, Charles R. Darwin, Alfred Russel Wallace, Herbert Spencer, John Tyndall, and Thomas Henry Huxley, were men of letters as well as of science. Chief of these five, as men of letters, were Darwin and Huxley. Their works ne er suffer from dryness and heaviness. Wallace is noteworthy as co-discoverer with Darwin of the principle of natural selection upon which the modern theory of physical evolution is based. A book of his, published at the close of the nineteenth century and entitled *The Wonderful Century*, shows distinctly literary talent. His exposition of the importance of dust, in Chapter IX, is a most interesting one. Tyndall was first a railway engineer, and then a student and teacher of physics. His volume on *Heat as a Mode of Motion* is interesting and clear to the veriest ignoramus in the science of physics, as well as to the expert. Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Psychology* (1885) anticipated, as Aristotle twenty-two centuries earlier did, Darwin's theory of the cosmic process of evolution. Spencer worked out a vast system of philosophy which was published as *Synthetic Philosophy*, in ten volumes, much of the philosophy of which, however, is already obsolete. Some of his isolated essays, as one on *The Philosophy of Style*, are well written, interesting, and of much use to the literary worker and to the educator generally.

Darwin. — Charles Darwin was born in 1809. More than any writer who has ever lived, he stirred to sympathetic or to hostile activity the mind of his century. It was not his literary achievements, strictly speaking, that brought so much of stimulus to man's mind, but the announcement in his *Origin of Species*, in 1859, of his famous biological theories on selection and evolution. There is not a great deal of literary merit in

either this or his next book, *The Descent of Man*, except in the quality of clearness, — though that is always half the battle on the way to good literary expression. But one always receives from Darwin the insistent suggestion that here was a man who could have been an eminent literary artist had he chosen to be; and in his little treatise on *Earthworms* he fully achieves literary eminence.

Huxley. — Huxley was also a biologist, and gave himself largely to the defense of the pioneers of the theory of evolution. From the literary point of view he was superior to all other men of science in his century, for he had the power of effective statement which would appeal to a most widespread audience, no matter what the subject to which he had turned his attention. His defense of the new theories extended itself to aggression against conservative theology. Both of these controversial attitudes, (1) for the theory of evolution and (2) against conservative theology, showed themselves in his *Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews*, published in 1870. His *Life of Hume* in the English Men of Letters series is also very worthy of note.

VI. Poetry

There were two great poets in the Victorian era, and a third who fell not far short of the glory of being great. There were at least three others who were little inferior to that third. The two great poets were, of course, Tennyson and Browning; the one who stood next to them, midway between them and the remaining three, was Arnold; the remaining three were Mrs. Browning, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Swinburne.

In addition to these poets, there were a few other minor ones who should receive some attention, — Macaulay, Fitzgerald, Thomas Lovell Beddoes, Arthur Hugh Clough, Christina Rossetti, and William Morris. Of American poets there lived

during this period, Longfellow, Emerson, Lowell, Holmes, Whittier, Poe, Whitman, and Lanier. We shall consider the minor poets before the greater.

1. *Minor Poets*

Macaulay is best known as a poet by his *Lays of Ancient Rome*. They are easily read, are rapid in their movement, and vigorously reflect the spirit of patriotism which the national history of his race had aroused within him. Fitzgerald will ever be famous for the translation of the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam, though the effect of the rather weakly philosophic teaching of the verses is more hurtful than helpful. The quatrains are interesting and very delightful for their uncommon musical quality, and rather striking to the Occidental reader for their Oriental touches, but have been responsible for a good deal of insincere and sentimental pessimism based upon little or no thinking. Thomas Lovell Beddoes should be better known than he is, for his poems, *Dream-Pedlary*, *Love in Idleness*, *The Dirge for Wolfram*, and a few others are excellent. There is at least music in these lines from the first-named poem,

> If there were dreams to sell,
> What would you buy?
> Some cost a passing bell,
> Some a light sigh
> That shakes from Life's fresh crown
> Only a roseleaf down.
> If there were dreams to sell —
> Merry and sad to tell —
> And the crier rang the bell,
> What would you buy?

It was in memory of Clough that Matthew Arnold wrote his *Thyrsis*, a poem ranking with the memorial poems written by

Milton, Shelley, and Tennyson. Clough was a serious poet, and caught many of the fleeting aspects of nature and fixed them in his verse. Doubtless his *The New Decalogue*, a highly satirical poem, is the best known of his poems. It is an excellent prod to the smug citizen of our time, so careless in matters of religion. He wrote nothing better, however, than these lines, —

> While the tired waves, vainly breaking
> Seem here no painful inch to gain,
> Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
> Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

Another work of his which is filled with fine and thoughtful verse is *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich.*

Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* is best described as "pretty," though the fantastic nature of its material has puzzled many into thinking it more thoughtful than it really is. But her sonnets under the title of *Monna Innominata*, fourteen in number, are very beautiful. Simple, fine, delicate, perfect in their ease and in the clearness with which they reach the reader's mind, — one does not hesitate to call them unsurpassed in the rapidity with which one may read them and feel that he knows at every line precisely what is said and meant. They have a spontaneous flow, a quickness of movement, refreshing to one who gives much time to the study of the sonnet, for from the pens of most poets the sonnet has seemed a most labored product. Her sonnets are not filled with profound thought, nor with overwhelming emotion; but for beautifully pure style they are irresistible.

William Morris, along with Christina Rossetti, Swinburne, and D. G. Rossetti, was a pre-Raphaelite, that is, one of a group of artists who tried to work as did the painters of Italy in the four-

POETS' CORNER, WESTMINSTER ABBEY, LONDON

teenth century, the century just prior to the one in which Raphael lived and wrought. They tried closely to copy nature. Morris was as much a prophet of socialism as Herbert Spencer was a denouncer of the slavery which he predicted the socialists would bring upon mankind, and he was a poet of no mean order. His *The Life and Death of Jason* did what few long epics in English have succeeded in doing, — secured a wide reading audience, — though the work is now considered not equal to *The Earthly Paradise*, a book which contains twelve narratives of classical origin and twelve of romantic. His *Sigurd the Volsung* is a grand version of an old Teutonic legend.

In America. — A word only must suffice for the leading American poets, even important as they are. They are entirely worthy of full and separate handling and study from that given in a history covering English literature as a whole. Longfellow was the bringer of the old world's culture to the new. Emerson was a most sincere but usually rather unmusical singer of his own philosophic moods and of a few common experiences that belong to all of us. Lowell was a better poet than he reckoned himself to be, but, after all, was too much a man of affairs, too much engaged in matters other than literary, to write many excellent verses. Holmes was America's best writer of occasional verse. Whittier was an even more practical poet than Lowell, giving his life chiefly to combating the evils of slavery, and yet very successful in pure poetry. Poe was the master in sheer music. Whitman wrote much that it is difficult for the normal human being to consider poetry, and yet he is acknowledged by all to have produced three or four poems worthy of comparison with anything written by any American. And Lanier, with *Corn*, *Ballad of Trees and the Master*, and *The Marshes of Glynn*, if he has not yet come into his own due meed of praise, will not fail to do so in time.

2. *Major Poets*

Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Rossetti, Swinburne, and Mrs. Browning remain of the Victorian poets to be considered in this chapter. Tennyson and those who wrote chiefly under his influence have been spoken of as the Idyllic school; Browning and those he inspired, including Mrs. Browning, as the Psychological school; Rossetti and Swinburne as members of the pre-Raphaelite group; and Arnold and Swinburne as members of the Renaissance group in the nineteenth century. It will thus be seen that Swinburne, being in two groups, has the distinction of not being easy to classify.

The lesser four of the major poets. — It will be simpler for us to consider Rossetti, Swinburne, Mrs. Browning, and Arnold before the greater poets, even though the two greater began their work earlier than these four.

John Ruskin had highly praised the decorative qualities of medieval art, accuracy in copying nature in all art, strictness of line, and strength in color, and had maintained that things reproduced in art should be reproduced in all details for their truth rather than for what most men would call their beauty. The two Rossettis, William Morris to some extent, and Swinburne also, were much taken with these teachings of Ruskin, and gave themselves to the study of medieval life and culture, being attracted particularly by the painters coming before Raphael. They became greatly interested in the medieval ways of doing things, and undertook to make the same and similar patterns in their work of painting; this they carried over into poetry. Poetry with them was a pattern to be woven after the fashion of the forms of nature, with all of her loving fidelity in treatment of detail, with all of her delicacy, all her strength, and all her riot of color. Christina Rossetti's work has al-

ready been outlined. That of William Morris has, also; but it should be said in this connection that it will be evident from the recollection of his poetry that one who would classify would find something of the same difficulty in including him within a definite group as in so including Swinburne.

Rossetti. — Dante Gabriel Rossetti began publishing poetry in 1850, but did not achieve phenomenal success until as late as 1870, when the poems he had buried in his wife's coffin in 1862 were exhumed and printed. Rossetti, as his name indicates, was of Italian blood upon his father's side. All the pre-Raphaelites were great lovers of physical beauty, and Rossetti came near accomplishing what the " naturalists " of the early romanticist days in the late eighteenth century had desired to accomplish. It may be more fair to think of him as very like Keats rather than like any other of the great poets. It is not easy to classify his poetry. One may think of his (1) sonnets, especially the beautiful ones in *The House of Life*. Then *The King's Tragedy* is among his (2) ballads the best of all. There is also that despairing but very beautiful (3) song, *The Woodspurge*. Other poems, beautiful in form and well balanced in thought and feeling, are *The Blessed Damozel*, *My Sister's Sleep*, *The Burden of Nineveh*, *Rose Mary*, and *A Last Confession*. The last of these five includes a description of a girl, which a painter could easily transfer to canvas. The first of the five is the most familiar to readers of English poetry. It is rather dreamy, but highly imaginative, and magnificent, also. The first two stanzas present a picture as natural, as vivid, and as delicate as an angel-piece by Fra Angelico:

> The blessed Damozel leaned out
> From the gold bar of Heaven;
> Her eyes knew more of rest and shade
> Than waters stilled at even;

She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
And her hair lying down her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

And there is the real flesh and blood of Fra Lippo Lippi's pictures in the stanza:

And still she bowed above the vast
Waste sea of worlds that swarm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

Swinburne. — Algernon Charles Swinburne wrote much that is very unwholesome, but also much that is of profound beauty. Throughout all of the latter there is a great deal of mellow music and of wisdom. Frequent passages of such sane and helpful thinking as the following redeem many other passages in which the baser passions have been too much exalted from their subordinate sphere:

For not the difference of the several flesh
Being vile or noble or beautiful or base
Makes praiseworthy, but purer spirit and heart
Higher than these meaner mouths and limbs, that feed,
Rise, rest, and are and are not.

Swinburne's first production of note was a drama, *The Queen-Mother*, showing much dramatic intelligence, but strongly imitative of the Elizabethan methods. In 1865 was published his best work of all, *Atalanta in Calydon*, one of the great poems

of the nineteenth century. It was also a drama, but in the Greek manner, as it was Greek in subject, following the well-known and fine story of the beautiful huntress, Atalanta. The choric singing in this drama is magnificent in its eloquence and exquisite in its melody. There is in the poem much of the revolutionary spirit which was characteristic of Swinburne. Although pure Greek in style, this drama is decidedly mixed in thought and sentiment, Swinburne pouring through the Greek molds much of modern destructive thought. But, having worked through the Elizabethan and the Greek methods, out of this labor came the fine finish which distinguishes his work from 1865 on. Yet in his next volume, entitled *Poems and Ballads*, many of the pieces so ruthlessly exalt the worser passions that great numbers of people of deep sensibility are still offended by them: but in the volume which followed it, *Songs before Sunrise*, the passionately musical soul of the author has risen from abandonment to enfranchisement. Swinburne now becomes a prophet of Freedom, of Nature, and of Man, and with high thought devotes his acute vision and keen sharpness of music to the interests, not of self, the individual, but of human society. *Mater Dolorosa*, *Mater Triumphalis*, and *The Oblation* are among the loveliest things he has written.

Swinburne's work is filled with eloquent verses such as

> My song is in the mist that hides thy morning,
> My cry is up before the day for thee;
> I have heard thee and beheld thee and give warning,
> Before thy wheels divide the sky and sea.

And he is abundant, too, in such passionate, crying music of pure beauty as

> Thou art more than the Gods who number the days of our temporal breath;
> For these give labour and slumber; but thou, Proserpina, death.

Mrs. Browning. — Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote verse of value as early as 1826, twenty years before she met Robert Browning, but *Casa Guidi Windows*, *Aurora Leigh*, *A Child's Grave at Florence*, and *Sonnets from the Portuguese* did not come until after that meeting. It was not until she was past forty years of age that she composed really excellent verse. Mrs. Browning's poetic feeling was sane and just, her power to see poetically was eminent in its clearness, but she did not have a good ear for sound, as her bad rhymes so often witness, and she frequently failed to write good poetry when she attempted to translate feeling into thought. As a *perfect workman* she is not the greatest poetess who has written in English; in that she is surpassed by Christina Rossetti.

Casa Guidi Windows took its title from the Florentine home in which she and her husband lived, and voiced the inspiration of the struggle of Italy to free itself from the domination of Austria. *Aurora Leigh* is a metrical romance, or a sort of verse novel-with-a-purpose, not unlike, in that respect, Coventry Patmore's *Angel in the House*. *A Child's Grave at Florence* came from the woman's own shadowed experience. But it is the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, misleading in title, except as to the word " Sonnets," upon which her final fame even so soon as our day is seen to rest. And yet here and there throughout her other poems she showed a breadth of view characteristic of large-minded women, one which transcended the narrow national views of most English and Continental poets; and she had a power of composing epigram which was most striking, as, for example, the line describing what happened upon the fall of Napoleon, —

> And kings crept out again to feel the sun.

Mrs. Browning's sonnets have been extravagantly praised, even to saying that they are the best since Shakespeare's, but,

while they do express certain things which cannot be found elsewhere, yet it can hardly be held that they are, as poetry, equal to the sonnets of Wordsworth or of Milton. They express both the humble and the exalted love of a woman's heart for Robert Browning, but they are neither so subtle nor so melodious as to be ranked with the greatest sonnets. It is impossible for a true lover of poetry to overlook the numerous and astonishing defects of her verse. One mourns that he is compelled to see them, for he would like to fix his attention exclusively, if that were possible, upon such glorious things as the sonnet opening with

> If thou must love me, let it be for naught
> Except for love's sake only —

Arnold. — Matthew Arnold was born in 1822. It was not until 1865 that he began to make much impression by his prose writings; but between 1849 and 1855 he had made a very definite place for himself with those who read poetry, and a place the like of which he alone, in English poetry, has filled. No one else has, in English poetry, written with such philosophic *serenity* of thought, nor does any one else have, in quite such large measure as in Arnold's writing, the lucidity, flexibility, and sanity of the classical spirit. His love of Goethe and of the Greeks aided in this respect his native endowment of temperament. Arnold had an inborn love for nature, too; but it was as a student of Wordsworth that he gained a definite point of view and a strong power of vision in relation to nature. Above all, Arnold was distinguished for his intellectual sincerity, his unfaltering trust in reason, his unwavering loyalty to the high white star of truth.

That Arnold spoke out much more clearly in his great prose than in his still greater poetry is the reason for his not yet

holding the place in the hearts of readers of poetry that he deserves to hold. He was a more *faultless* artist than either Tennyson or Browning, and even in his poetry he was more of a conveyor of ideas than any other author of his day. The fact that he knew he was greatly under the influence of Goethe, the Greeks, and Wordsworth kept his poetical voice more subdued, however, than it otherwise would have been. But the classic character of his verse will ever be a unique novelty to the reader of English verse down to Arnold's day, particularly unique and novel to one who is unfamiliar with the ancient classical poetry. And yet the grace and feeling and music of the romantic spirit are the *content* of this austere and " correct," classically *formed* poetry of Arnold's. The effect, therefore, of his poetry is very different from that of the " correct " verse of Alexander Pope, which was lacking in grace and feeling and music.

Arnold's first real contribution to permanent literature was in the volume entitled *The Strayed Reveller, and Other Poems*, 1849. In this volume there was included *The Forsaken Merman*, one of his best poems, wonderful for its pathos, and for the beautiful pictures of the sea caverns:

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;

Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

In 1852 Arnold wrote a volume entitled *Empedocles on Etna*, containing a number of other poems besides the title-piece. *Tristram and Iseult* is the best known among the other poems. One of the finest of its passages is in reference to Iseult of Ireland:

And she, too, that princess fair,
If her bloom be now less rare,
Let her have her youth again —
Let her be as she was then!
Let her have her proud dark eyes
And her petulant quick replies —
Let her sweep her dazzling hand
With its gesture of command,
And shake back her raven hair,
With the old imperious air!

Among the satisfying lines of *Empedocles* are these:

'Tis Apollo comes leading
His choir, the Nine.
— The leader is fairest,
But all are divine.
They are lost in the hollows!
They stream up again!
What seeks on this mountain
The glorified train?

Another volume followed in 1853, containing some poems which had been formerly printed and some new ones. The new ones are now famous: *Sohrab and Rustum*, *The Church of Brou*, *The Scholar Gipsy*, and *Requiescat* were among them, the first

a much-read story, the last worthy of comparison, for its beauty, with Tennyson's " Break, break, break."

Balder Dead and *Separation* were newly written poems in a volume published in 1855. *Merope, a Tragedy* came in 1858. In 1867 a volume entitled *New Poems* contained the remainder of Arnold's best poetry, with the exception of the beautiful lines on *Westminster Abbey*. This volume of 1867 included most of the poems of the kind in which Arnold excelled, namely, the elegy. Among them were *Thyrsis*, *Rugby Chapel*, *Heine's Grave*, *Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse*, and *Obermann Once More*. *Thyrsis*, like Milton's *Lycidas*, Shelley's *Adonais*, and Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, is in memory of a dear friend, in this case Arthur Hugh Clough. There is not in this poem, as there is not in the other great elegies, any morbid dwelling upon death. The author escapes from such contemplation easily and healthily, though sadly, and dwells upon hope.

Empedocles on Etna and *Merope* were dramas in form. They were attempts to restore in drama the Greek subject matter and execution. Swinburne in *Atalanta in Calydon* was, however, much more successful in the endeavor to do the thing that Arnold attempted. Yet Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* is greatly superior to all three of these. Still, some, if not even a great deal, of fine poetry is in both the dramas by Arnold.

It was the practice during the mid-nineteenth century for a great author to lay emphasis upon some aspect of life and the means to a greater life. With Carlyle it had been strength, with John Stuart Mill it had been liberty, with Ruskin it had been nature, with Arnold it was culture. And Arnold took up the cause of culture with a public-spirited motive, and in a public-spirited way, as is not always the practice of the self-styled exponents of culture. His theory of poetry was a vital one. In an essay on *Wordsworth*, he said, " It is important,

ALFRED TENNYSON

therefore, to hold fast to this: that poetry is at the bottom a criticism of life; that the greatness of a poet lies in his powerful and beautiful application of ideas to life, — to the question: How to live." Truth and high seriousness in substance, and felicity and perfection of diction and manner, are the qualities which make great poetry, he taught; and he taught also that " in poetry, as a criticism of life . . . the spirit of our race will find, . . . as time goes on and as other helps fail, its consolation and stay." Arnold, however, excepting in such poems as *Sohrab and Rustum*, is a poet to be read by one late rather than early in his studies, because for their full enjoyment his poems require so much of culture and literary interest.

The greater two. — The two remaining poets present the greatest contrast between any two poets contemporary with each other that can be found in the history of English writing. But each was needed to accomplish what the other did not do; and so between them we are fortunate enough to have the most complete and full-rounded body of poetic observation and reflection and inspiration of life which literature offers. Tennyson was the one who may be said to have almost stood still during his sixty and more years of production; Browning, the one who moved constantly forward. Each attitude has its advantage. The standing still permits of a calmness of impression and of workmanship which movement forward does not allow; while change and development furthers and leads all progressive life.

Tennyson. — During at least fifty years, from 1842 to 1892, Tennyson worked at one level of achievement, — some would say for sixty years, from 1832 to the year of his death, 1892. And his work was, during that long period, almost perfect in its skill and in its adequate picturing of the thought and life about him. The poem beginning

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!

published in 1842, and the lyric entitled *Crossing the Bar*, written on his deathbed in 1892, are equal in technical delicacy of form, and equal in what we should expect from youth and age in a similar mood. It was this technical excellence of this truly *master* hand which, among other writers, kept English poetry, despite many desperate spasmodic attempts to break through and away, at more or less of a standstill in form for half a century.

Tennyson had five technical gifts, richly and fully developed from an early age: *first*, the faculty of close observation of minute details of nature, precisely what Wordsworth excelled in; *second*, the power faithfully and happily to present a sharply accurate picture of what he had seen, such as Chaucer was most fully endowed with; *third*, the skill so to modulate the elements of speech, from vowel up to stanza, as to create a musical accompaniment both to picture and to emotional and intellectual ideas, such as Shelley possessed in full measure; *fourth*, a great gift in varying metrical measure, and especially in the writing of blank verse distinguished for a magnificence in which Milton alone exceeded him; and, *fifth*, a copious vocabulary worthy of a Keats. Furthermore, after the days in which he had given himself up almost entirely to perfecting his technical skill (that is to say, after 1842), Tennyson showed in each of his more important productions a successful impulse to express some movement in popular thought. For example, in 1847 the question of feminine education expressed itself in *The Princess;* in 1850 *In Memoriam* reflected the air of philosophic religious resignation which was then becoming popular; and in 1855 *Maud* was Tennyson's falling in line with the outcry against peace-at-any-price commercialism.

Tennyson's first period. — Alfred Tennyson was born in 1809, — a notable year; for in that year there were born also Gladstone, Darwin, Mendelssohn, Holmes, Lord Houghton, Poe, Fitzgerald, and Lincoln. In 1830 Tennyson published a volume of poems, the best things in which appear in later editions as *Juvenilia*, or things written in youth. Among those that have survived, the best are *Claribel*, *Mariana*, *The Ode to Memory*, *The Dying Swan*, *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, and *The Sea Fairies*. Tennyson said of the *Ode to Memory* that it was based upon his own nature and upon hints from the incidents of his own life as a youth. In these poems the most marked qualities are picture presentation and musical accompaniment.

The volume of 1833. — Another volume was printed in 1833. The best in this volume are *The Lady of Shalott*, *The Lotus-Eaters*, *The Palace of Art*, *A Dream of Fair Women*, *Mariana in the South*, *The Two Voices*, and *Fatima*. Englishmen, very naturally, are fond of another little poem, without title, in this group, in which occur the stanzas, —

> It is the land that freemen till,
> That sober-suited Freedom chose,
> The land, where girt with friends or foes
> A man may speak the thing he will;
>
> A land of settled government,
> A land of just and old renown,
> Where Freedom slowly broadens down
> From precedent to precedent.

Two or three other poems of this volume, such as *The May Queen*, are very popular. Readers sometimes have difficulty in understanding *The Lady of Shalott* and *The Palace of Art*. Canon Ainger quotes Tennyson as thus interpreting the change which is depicted as coming over the Lady of Shalott: "The

new-born love for something, for some one in the wide world from which she had been so long excluded, takes her out of the region of shadows into that of realities." As for *The Palace of Art*, Archbishop Trench once said to its author, "Tennyson, we cannot live by art," to which Tennyson replied, "*The Palace of Art* is the embodiment of my own belief that the God-like life is with man and for man." Pictures and some genuine human life are the characteristics of the poems of 1833.

***The Idylls*, 1842.** — In 1842 a third volume was published, entitled *English Idylls and Other Poems*. Edward Fitzgerald says that Tennyson never rose above nor even ever equaled the poems of 1842. Tennyson had already begun to brood over the Arthurian legends as early as when he wrote *The Lady of Shalott*, and now in *Morte d'Arthur*, *Sir Galahad*, and *Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere* he is quite deeply into the mood and matter of these legends. Opinions differ as to the best among these poems of 1842; but among the best surely are *Ulysses*, *Morte d'Arthur*, *Love and Duty*, *Locksley Hall*, *The Vision of Sin*, *The Poet's Song*, the exquisite song, "Break, break, break," *St. Agnes' Eve*, and *Sir Galahad*. Only second to these come *The Gardener's Daughter*, *Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere*, and "Come not when I am dead." *Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue* was included in this edition, and is the only volatile piece that Tennyson ever wrote. All of the five technical gifts which we have (on page 310) stated as characterizing his verse are found developed in highest degree in these poems of 1842. Of all this group, *Ulysses*, "Break, break, break," and *Morte d'Arthur* are unquestionably the superior poems. In *Œnone* the reader who has come straight down through the history of English verse will find new notes in blank verse, and, later than *Ulysses*, he will find in one of the lyrics in *The Princess*, the one beginning "Tears, idle tears," a singing quality

for the first time bestowed upon blank verse; but it is in *Ulysses* that he will find the best blank verse in English poetry. In *Ulysses* also we learn how rightly to take both "the thunder and the sunshine" of life. Dr. John Brown has said of "Break, break, break," that "Out of these few simple words, deep and melancholy, and sounding as the sea, flows forth all *In Memoriam*, as a stream flows out of its spring, — all is here." Nothing need be added to indicate its importance. In *Morte d'Arthur*, if we learn nothing else, we at least learn that King Arthur's Round Table "was an image of the mighty world," and that is a good deal for the student of literature to learn.

That Tennyson at the age of thirty-three was intensely interested in moral, religious, and social problems is evident from *The Vision of Sin* and from *Locksley Hall*. The latter poem, though spoken in the tone of a disappointed lover, yet contains the sum of its author's politics. His point of view from this time never altered materially, though it underwent some natural change with age. After this date Tennyson never did anything entirely new in kind of poetry, — that is to say, his resources as a creative craftsman had reached their apex. But he produced much noble and thoughtful poetry, and a great deal with most exquisite music in its lines.

Tennyson's second period. — Tennyson's work might be said to have closed its first period in 1842. A second period began in 1847 and extended to 1875. At the latter date Tennyson was producing drama. Between the two dates there were published *The Princess*, *In Memoriam*, *Maud*, various portions of the *Idylls of the King*, and *Enoch Arden*, the last appearing in 1864. It is sometimes said that Tennyson had now, by 1847, passed out of his lyrical stage. That is true only to the extent that the bulk of his work from 1847 on is not chiefly lyrical, though *Maud* and *The Princess* contain lyrical songs which reveal Tennyson

to be so excellent in musical verse that not even Christina Rossetti is a finer singer than he.

The Princess. — *The Princess* compares favorably in its mock-heroic tone with Pope's *The Rape of the Lock;* and by way of contrast it is a first-class example of the romantic as against the " classical " poetry. It is one of the most pleasing poems in the language, largely because of the lyrics that are included within it. Tennyson's love of color, rich as that of Keats, his accuracy of observation of natural things, animate and inanimate, his keeping abreast of the thought movements in his day, are all revealed in *The Princess;* but, again, it is the lyrical songs here and there that are the true and fine poetry of the piece. " Tears, idle Tears," " Sweet and low," and " The splendour falls on castle walls," are as fine songs as can be found in the pages of literature.

In Memoriam. — *In Memoriam* was written in memory of Arthur Henry Hallam, a brilliant youth who had been engaged to Tennyson's sister at the time of his death. Tennyson was deeply moved by Hallam's death, and in canto V gives the reason for his beginning the poem:

> But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
> A use in measured language lies;
> The sad mechanic exercise,
> Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

The poem is best studied by dividing it into: introductory cantos, I to XXVII; first cycle of cantos, XXVIII to LXXVII; second cycle, LXXVIII to CIII; third cycle, CIV to CXXXI (a Retrospect in cantos CXX to CXXXI), and an epithalamium or wedding hymn at the close. Each cycle of cantos takes the reader through a year. With each recurrent season of the year the author's feelings are a little less sad, until at the very

end he rises to the triumphant faith that his friend lives in God,

> That God, which ever lives and loves,
> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves.

We may note a very few interesting points in the cantos. The first canto begins with an appropriate reference to Goethe. Canto XLVIII contains a phrase which best of all describes the lyrics in the poem, — "Short swallow-flights of song." Canto LIV has within it more quoted lines than any other. Perhaps the last quatrain in canto LVII is the best example of the peculiar effect of the meter employed throughout the poem. Canto LXXXVI is, poetically, the high-water mark of the poem. Canto CXXVI is a wonderfully fine lyric, the most stately in the poem, though not so imaginative as LXXXVI.

The highest value of *In Memoriam* is its expression of a thought which met the need of the generation during the life of which it was written. The thought is that man's hope is rather in the ultimate destiny of humanity in a future life, than in any change here which will remake the present life.

Maud. — *Maud* is the next great poem which Tennyson published. It sprang from lines printed in 1836, beginning

> O that 'twere possible
> After long grief and pain,

and now included in Part II of *Maud*. This poem is a Monodrama; that is, it is concerned with the revelation of action with but one character involved. Tennyson's mastery of lyric verse is at its best in the songs of *Maud*. An interesting fact is noted by Aubrey de Vere, that in the love-complexities of this poem the birds take a vehement part. In the sonnet beginning

" Cold and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek " there is a very fine anapestic movement. The verses beginning

> Go not, happy day,
> From the shining fields

illustrate well a type of trochaic movement. The lyrics Tennyson himself liked best were the one from which the poem grew, mentioned above, and the one with the opening line " I have led her home, my love, my only friend," yet we are inclined to think that the lyric beginning " Come into the garden, Maud," is superior to them, and, in fact, the best lyrical work since Keats and Shelly. The reader is dull of ear who fails to hear the music in

> And the soul of the rose went into my blood
> As the music clash'd in the hall;
> And long by the garden lake I stood,
> For I heard your rivulet fall
> From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
> Our wood, that is dearer than all!
>
> From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
> That whenever a March-wind sighs
> He sets the jewel-print of your feet
> In violets blue as your eyes,
> To the woody hollows in which we meet
> And the valleys of Paradise.

A most beautiful lyric also is one beginning

> Maud with her exquisite face,
> And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky.

The finest and most weighty line in the whole poem is the next to the last line, —

> I have felt with my native land, I am one with my kind.

The whole poem admits easily of dramatic analysis through tragic suspense and crisis of upward movement to a resolution at the close.

Maud was censured at the time of its publication as having been written against Quakers. That was unfair; for, while Tennyson did bring out in the poem that there are curses which peace sometimes brings that are worse than those brought by war, yet his attack was only upon the peace-at-all-price men.

More idylls. — Tennyson did not equal Milton in the stateliness of his blank verse, but, beginning with four of the idylls in *Idylls of the King*, in 1859, and continuing through additional idylls until 1885, he wrote the finest non-dramatic blank verse in English, with the exception of that in *Paradise Lost* and in his own *Ulysses*. The finest blank *verse*, — but the exceptional high quality of the *Idylls* as *poetry* is open to question. Fineness of style alone does not make great poetry. Tennyson in these idylls attempted both to give a picture of human progress and to portray human characters in this progress; but in character delineation the idylls are weak, with an occasional exception. The exceptions, as the description of Modred in *Guinevere* and of Lancelot in *Lancelot and Elaine*, are but brief flashes. As an "Arthuriad," the *Idylls of the King* have too much of a modern air. And as an allegory representing "Sense at war with Soul," as Tennyson himself called it, the inevitable comparison with *The Pilgrim's Progress* reveals the meaning in Bunyan's work to be clearer and the human figures to be very much more real. It is best, then, to think of the idylls as separate poems, and discriminate between them. Thinking thus of them, it will be easy to accord the quality of greatness to *The Holy Grail*, *The Last Tournament*, and *Guinevere*.

Enoch Arden. — *Enoch Arden* was published in 1864. Its verse is beautiful, and the author's sympathy with the homely

English rural life is full and real. It has been a very popular poem, because the story of it is an affecting one; but its rather weak sentiment and the failure clearly to outline its characters make the poem fail to give the impression of power in its writer.

Tennyson's third period. Ballads. — *Ballads and Other Poems* was the name of a volume which appeared in 1880. Some of Tennyson's best work was in this collection, — *The First Quarrel*, *Rizpah*, *The Voyage of Maeldune*, *The Revenge*, and *The Defence of Lucknow*, the last two being the best war songs in English since those of Campbell. There is much that is dramatic in the character of these two war songs, but Tennyson could not be satisfied to bring his work to an end without entering the field of drama proper. By virtue of the lyrics in "the wonderful flower-show," as Browning called Tennyson's earlier verse, Lord Tennyson stood at the head of all English artists in his own day; by virtue of the epic narratives of his mid-life he stood at the head of all writers in English literature in the handling of the spirit of the Arthurian legends; but he must, he thought, before he ended his work, attempt to do what the Elizabethans had done, — write great dramas. He did not succeed in writing great dramas, though he wrote at least three good ones, *Queen Mary*, *Harold*, and *Becket*.

The Dramas. — One reason why they are not great is because Tennyson failed to see that the Elizabethan way of constructing dramas belonged to the Elizabethan time, and that he, late in the nineteenth century, could not do precisely what had been done almost three centuries before. These three dramas are historical, as their titles suggest, and to one who has a fair familiarity with their historical background they are very interesting to read. *Becket* was a success upon the stage. The dramatic motive of struggle between church and state embodied in Becket and Henry, and the dramatic collision in Thomas á Becket

himself between soldier and churchman (for he was both), make many thrilling moments in the play. *The Foresters*, a much lighter play in four acts, with Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, The Sheriff of Nottingham, and the rest of them, as its characters, has also met with success upon the stage.

His last verse. — *Crossing the Bar* was Tennyson's "swan-song," and is known and sung wherever the English language is spoken.

Tennyson was a lesser man in some qualities than Chaucer and Spenser, than Shakespeare and Milton, than Coleridge and Wordsworth, than Shelley and Keats, but, with the exception of Shakespeare, he was superior to any of them in the resourcefulness and originality of his harmonic measures.

Browning. The content of his poetry. — Robert Browning, born in 1812, was most romantic in his youth, even going to the extent of an almost positive conviction that two nightingales which had settled in his father's garden at Camberwell were the souls of Shelley and Keats who had returned to sing to the one young person in all the world who understood and rightly adored them. Facts and attitudes of mind and heart of this kind in his life were forgotten later, and still are, by those who have devoted themselves to looking at Browning from one point of view only, that of his thought, or "philosophy." The truth is, that Browning's mind was passionately romantic his whole life long. It is only gradually that readers are coming to understand that the one thing his poetry actually overflows with is the idea that love is the highest of all possible relationships among mankind, that it is so because it presents the highest of all opportunities for spiritual growth and attainment, and that through it will come the triumph of the life of man.

The leading poems. — Browning's most important poems were these, with the times of their publications:

I. *Pauline*, 1833.
II. *Paracelsus*, 1835.
III. *Strafford*, 1837.
IV. *Pippa Passes*, 1841.
V. *Dramatic Lyrics*, of various dates in the forties and fifties.
VI. *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*, 1843.
VII. *Dramatic Romances*, of various dates in the forties and fifties.
VIII. *A Soul's Tragedy*, 1846.
IX. *Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day*, 1850.
X. *Men and Women*, 1855.
XI. *Dramatis Personæ*, 1864.
XII. *The Ring and the Book*, 1868–69.
XIII. *Translation of the Agamemnon of Æschylus*, 1877.
XIV. *Dramatic Idylls*, 1879–80.
XV. *Asolando: Fancies and Facts*, 1889.

His style and subject matter. — Among these are some of the greatest poems of the century. But even among these greatest ones there are some not easy for the moderate intellect, at least, to understand. The reason they are not easy to understand is that in so many instances they are (to use a line of his in a curious poem called *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country, or Turf and Towers*), "Impalpability reduced to speech." And they are rather breathlessly spoken at that. It is not a mere incident or thought that Browning tries to write of, but the "soul," as he would put it, of the incident or of the thought.

Browning had a very strong tendency to use the very first word that came to him; and, because of the curiously varied and large range of his vocabulary, that first word often is the one the average person would think it most unlikely would ever occur to him. The Virgilian dignity of diction cultivated by Tennyson and those most deeply influenced by him was farthest from Browning's choice of wording. And yet he was not so "obscure," as he is frequently said to have been. Rather is this the

case, — that his readers are unwilling to understand that he saw more swiftly than others and from many sides at the same time, and that he undertook to express all these views at once. The result is that Browning never allows us a view of a whole thing or incident or situation or soul-state at once, — he keeps us so busy trying to catch a glimpse from each of the viewpoints he makes us take. Browning is altogether too "life-like" for most of us who read to grasp him quickly. In the bulk of his poetry he tries to be what he calls "dramatic in principle," that is (he explains), to give the utterances of imaginary persons, — not his own utterances. In following out this attempt he shifts the talk of his characters as rapidly as it is shifted in real life, — and that is hard to follow when it gets into cold print.

But Browning's style was a boon to English poetry, for the real analytical processes of the human mind were in danger of being concealed underneath the balanced and honeyed flow of the Tennysonian poetry.

Love and the triumph of life in the face of all its hitherto supposed-to-be enemies, such as age, failure, and approaching death, — that is the chief *content* of the poetry of Robert Browning. So far as *form* is concerned, Browning believed in "good draughtsmanship and right handling," as he says in a preface he wrote in 1867. He constantly attempted dramatic form, but succeeded in securing only dramatic tone. This, however, it is that makes the work of Browning unique, — that he could employ a Shakespearean power of psychological analysis and secure the same tone of intense passion and critical situation in *monologues* in which characters dissected their own minds or revealed their souls in lyrical speculation, as other poets secured by the clash of character upon character revealed through *dialogue*.

To 1855. — Both *Pauline* and *Paracelsus* were written in imitation of the "sun-treader," Shelley. *Pauline*, as most of his poems did, confined itself to the actions of the human soul, not to external affairs, nor to actions of the soul that show themselves openly in outward ways. For a first attempt it is a powerful piece of work. But Browning himself did not think much of it. In a copy of his own, he wrote, "Only this crab remains of the shapely Tree of Life in my fool's paradise." *Paracelsus*, however, is a very great poem. *Pauline* has but one character speaking, *Paracelsus* has four. Yet the second poem, as the first, is the treatment of one soul, — in the case of the second, a soul in converse with other souls. Some of the strongest things Browning ever said are in *Paracelsus:*

"This perfect, clear perception — which is truth."

"To KNOW
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without."

"God! Thou art mind!"

"God is the perfect poet
Who in his person acts his own creations."

"God! Thou art love! I build my faith on that."

"Measure your mind's height by the shade it casts."

"All love assimilates the soul
To what it loves."

"Love, hope, fear, faith — these make humanity.
These are its sign and note and character."

"Progress is
The law of life, man is not Man as yet."

It is only in the tenth division of *The Ring and the Book*, entitled " The Pope," that Browning expresses his profoundest thoughts more finely than in *Paracelsus*.

Paracelsus has five divisions, but it can hardly be called a five-act drama. But *Strafford*, which the actor Macready suggested that Browning should write, is a regular acting play, and was as successful upon the stage as most poetic dramas ever have been, since those of the Elizabethans. It is a difficult play because it is political as well as poetic. Mr. Chesterton thinks that only two political plays have ever been done admirably: Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* and Rostand's *L'Aiglon*, the latter a nineteenth-century French play dealing with the son of Napoleon I. The subject Browning undertook in his political play was a large one, for Strafford (who was executed by Charles I) was one of the greatest of England's great men in both intellect and character; but the play does not go very well with us, for Strafford, in attempting to establish a strong official despotism, was so out of harmony with our present-day ideas that we have difficulty in according to him the tribute of greatness.

Pippa Passes has more of the dramatic spirit in it than have most of his poems, though it is only a series of dramatic sketches — " Morning," " Noon," " Evening," " Night " — rather than a true drama. Prefacing the 1907 edition of the poem there is this editorial statement, — " This drama is hinged on the chance appearance of Pippa, a poor child, at work all the year round (save one day) at the silk-mills at Asolo, in Northern Italy, at critical moments in the spiritual life history of the leading characters in the play. Just when their emotions, passions, motives are swinging backwards and forwards, Pippa passes by, singing some refrain, and her voice determines the actions and fashions the destinies of men and women to whom

she was unknown. It is a play of much simplicity, as well as of rare charm and beauty." There is little more to be added, except to suggest the likeness of the first part, "Morning," to *Macbeth*, in the representation of crime and its effect upon Ottima and Sebald, and in the fact that it is Pippa's song, ending

> God's in his heaven —
> All's right with the world,

which, like the knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*, summons these two people back to the light of common day.

The DRAMATIC LYRICS contain poems which refute any thought that Browning could not be clear or could employ no music but that of discords. The "Cavalier Tunes" are very popular, as also are *Evelyn Hope* and *Love among the Ruins*, the last-named being one of the most musical of poems in English. Here is the first of its seven stanzas, —

> Where the quiet-colored end of evening smiles,
> Miles and miles
> On the solitary pastures where our sheep
> Half-asleep
> Tinkle homeward thro' the twilight, stray or stop
> As they crop —
> Was the site once of a city great and gay,
> (So they say)
> Of our country's very capital, its prince
> Ages since
> Held his court in, gathered councils wielding far
> Peace or war.

The seventh and last stanza ends with Browning's characteristic formula, "Love is best."

A Blot in the 'Scutcheon is a three-act drama, a beautiful story, and has been successfully presented in the theater within our own day.

Among the DRAMATIC ROMANCES the most read are *The Glove*, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, and *Porphyria's Lover*. Better than these is *The Patriot*, and greater than it are *In a Gondola* and *My Last Duchèss*, and the most perfect thing the poet ever wrote is thought by many to be *The Last Ride Together*.

In *A Soul's Tragedy* are found some of the characteristic teachings of Browning. In speaking of death he asks

> How dare we go without a reverent pause,
> A growing less unfit for heaven?

And at the end of this two-act "drama" he says, "You only do right to believe you must get better as you get older. All men do so; they are worst in childhood, improve in manhood, and get ready in old age for another world. Youth, with its beauty and grace, would seem bestowed on us for some such reason as to make us partly endurable till we have time for really becoming ourselves."

Christmas-Eve and *Easter-Day* are religious poems, among the world's very best. There is general agreement that Browning is foremost among religious poets. He thought the essential truths of religions could be found in all Christian creeds. This is evident from stanza XIX of the first of these two poems. Browning's religious belief, taking his poems as a whole, may be summed up in the statement that Christianity "teaches a universal love, and that this love was embodied in a divine Man," the example for all who come after him. Among the best passages in *Christmas-Eve* are these two:

> "God who registers the cup
> Of mere cold water, for His sake
> To a disciple rendered up,
> Disdains not His own thirst to slake
> At the poorest love ever offered:
> And because my heart I proffered,

With true love trembling at the brim,
He suffers me to follow Him
Forever, my own way, — dispensed
From seeking to be influenced
By all the immediate ways
That earth, in worships manifold,
Adopts to reach, by prayer and praise,
The garment's hem, which, lo, I hold!"

"Earth breaks up, time drops away,
In flows heaven, with its new day
Of endless life, when He who trod,
Very man and very God,
This earth in weakness, shame, and pain,
Dying the death whose signs remain
Up yonder on the accursed tree, —
Shall come again, no more to be
Of captivity the thrall,
But the one God, All in all,
King of kings, Lord of lords,
As His servant John received the words,
'I died, and live forevermore!'"

After 1855. — After the publication of MEN AND WOMEN, in 1855, there was little doubt among even those who had been speaking of Browning merely as "that unintelligible man who married the poetess," that here was a true poet, and one who soon would probably be considered great. *Fra Lippo Lippi* and *Andrea del Sarto* are masterpieces. Their subject matter is of special interest to readers who are already interested in art. Consideration of art is continued in some of the poems in DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, especially in *A Face* and *Abt Vogler*. But the moral life, and the life of ideals generally, is also present in them. One of the better stanzas in *Abt Vogler* is the tenth, —

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
Enough that He heard it once: we shall hear it by-and-by.

But greater than these poems on art are three in DRAMATIS PERSONÆ on love and religion, namely, *James Lee's Wife*, *Prospice*, and *Rabbi Ben Ezra*. Beautiful almost to an extreme is Browning's belief in love as the highest of all spiritual opportunities, and loftily heroic is his faith in the final triumph of life. There is no other place in modern poetry to find so clear, so cheerful, and so unshaken a certainty that life and God are good and that the best is yet to be, as in the poems of Robert Browning, especially in the poems just mentioned.

If Browning had omitted books II, III, IV, VIII, and IX from the twelve books of *The Ring and the Book*, this poem over which he spent six years of labor would be more widely read than it is. There are three chief characters in this poem, Count Guido, the girl Pompilia, and the priest Caponsacchi, and there is abundance of action and of material for more action, but Browning had now learned that he could not well handle the dramatic form, and hence he employs the dramatic material with the dramatic spirit only and not in its technical form. Instead of the drama-plan, he adopts a plan which permits of no development of character; in the first book to tell the story, and then to comment upon or study it in nine following books from nine different points of view, book XI reverting to the view-point of VII, and book XII being an epilogue. Browning impresses upon us that in any argument every one who takes part in it is

to some degree right. Another thing is that justice is neither something delusive nor merely a matter of legal administration, but that it is a mysterious thing, which, however, can be meted out only when truth is really discovered; but it is necessary to listen to all sides with largeness of heart and with extreme patience. Because the poem shows that it is possible to say so much of tremendous import about so small and so mean things as arise for consideration in the poem, *The Ring and the Book* has been called "the great epic of the nineteenth century, . . . the great epic of the enormous importance of small things." Guido, Caponsacchi, and Pompilia are wonderfully drawn characters, Pompilia one of the best in literature. The book called "The Pope" does not so well delineate a character. But it expresses on its grandest scale the philosophy of the poet. To this Pope stumblingblocks in this world are intended to be used as stepping-stones; all of us have a right to these stumbling-blocks, to be used as our stepping-stones. "This life is a training and a passage."

Agamemnon, translated from the Greek dramatist, Æschylus, has been accused of being almost as hard for the English reader as the Greek itself. It is not easy to read, for it is almost a literal translation; but, even so, it carries over into the English, almost unaltered, the tone and spirit of the Greek drama itself.

Of the DRAMATIC IDYLLS *Pheidippides* is much read, and *Ivan Ivanovitch* is equally worthy of being much read. *Tray* is Browning's argument against vivisection.

ASOLANDO: FANCIES AND FACTS contains Browning's last poems, and was published after his death. *Reverie* is perhaps the chiefest of them all. In all the universe, this poem says, Power came first, then Knowledge, revealing that Good had been made manifest in the exercise of Power, — "In all things Good at best," —

Then life is — to wake, not sleep,
Rise and not rest, but press
From earth's level where blindly creep
Things perfected, more or less,
To the heaven's height, far and steep,

Where, amid what strifes and storms
May wait the adventurous quest,
Power is Love — . . .
. . . . . .

From the first, Power was — I knew.
Life has made clear to me
That, strive but for closer view,
Love were as plain to see.

Epilogue also reveals this poet's great faith, strong endurance, and shining optimism, — his unfailing adherence to love as life's opportunity and to the belief that life will triumph at last.

3. *Drama*

Drama as literature. — As this is a history of English *literature*, not much can be said about the drama in English during the nineteenth century, for when literary men turned themselves to the writing of drama, they almost uniformly did much poorer work than in any other form of their labors, and when writers of plays produced what succeeded well upon the stage, it was almost uniformly not very commendable as literature. If " any representation of imaginary persons which is capable of interesting an average audience assembled in a theater " is dramatic, as Mr. William Archer defiantly asserts, then many chapters might be given to a treatment of dramatic writing; but we can here be interested only in dramatic *literature*. In spite of the fact that this distinction is a sore point, especially with many present-day playwrights, yet the distinction must

be made by the historian and literary critic. No matter how many hundreds of nights a play may run upon the stage, if it does not give evidence that the writer has "felt, seen, thought, or at least wondered, with a deep and genuine movement," if it does not give evidence that the writer has a command of the resources of form, especially of diction (the choice and order of words), and if the rhythm of the verse or prose, whichever it may be, is no more than patter or rattle, then that play can take no place in the history of literature.

Typical nineteenth-century dramas. — Coleridge's *Remorse* (or *Osorio*) and his *Zapolya* were successful within the theater for a few nights, but they have no more place than mere mention in the pages of literary history. Bulwer Lytton's *The Lady of Lyons*, *Richelieu*, and *Money* have been played for three quarters of a century and more, and are fairly good reading, too. George Eliot's poems all suffer from heaviness. Her drama called *The Spanish Gipsy* is no exception. Its conception is grand, some of its scenes are vivid; an occasional single line, and now and then even more, may be found to be excellent; but the most ardent admirer of its author cannot make a good claim for this drama as a work of art. Browning's *Strafford* does not admit of a stage revival, though that most pathetic play *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* was and still is a good stage play and a fairly good work of literary art. Tennyson's *Queen Mary*, *Harold*, *Becket*, and *The Foresters* have among them only one play which has been quite successful,—*Becket*. Byron's *Cain* and Shelley's *Cenci* are not acting dramas. Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon* is a good restoration of the Greek drama, but it has not been successful on the stage. As literature it suffers from a fact which Greek literature of all the European literatures alone does not suffer from, namely, that it has a pattern literature to be modeled after. The plays of T. W. Robertson,

notably *Caste*, and of W. S. Gilbert, notably *Pygmalion and Galatea*, are readable and have been played again and again with success, especially *Caste*.

The best literary drama. — There is room for difference of opinion as to whether Browning's *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* or Tennyson's *Becket* is the best play of the century. In characterization, in action, and in the union of the two, Tennyson's play seems the better. None of Arnold's plays is equal to this one of Tennyson's, because Arnold is too lyrical, — he presents to us his own mind, rather than represents for us the mind of another. And in Browning's play the moral teaching is made more important than the revelation of character, and the action is too involved for a successful play. It will not be possible to speak with certainty of the dramatists of our own day, though in the next chapter it will be necessary to make a tentative estimate of several of them.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Under what heads may the literature of the Victorian era be considered?

2. Who were the leading historians of that era? Name a work by each of three of them.

3. Name the three greatest novelists of the Victorian era, and two works by each.

4. Why do you think Dickens has been so immensely popular?

5. If you have seen "Becky Sharp" played upon the stage, compare the stage treatment with Thackeray's treatment of Becky in *Vanity Fair*.

6. Which do you prefer, *The Mill on the Floss* or *Silas Marner*? Why?

7. Of novels written by authors of this period who are called "minor novelists," what ones have you read?

8. In what ways does Stevenson seem to you to differ from the fiction writers of the middle of the century? With how many novels of the sea are you familiar?

9. Consult the classification of short-stories made on pages 390–392, and then classify all the short-stories you have read of those that were written by the authors mentioned on pages 275–278.

10. Describe Macaulay, Carlyle, Arnold, Newman, Pater, and Ruskin as critics. Be careful to distinguish among them.

11. Name five great scientists of this period who were also "men of letters." Give the title of one work by each.

12. Answer the question asked in the lines quoted from Thomas Lovell Beddoes, page 297.

13. What can you remember having read of the poems of Matthew Arnold, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Mrs. Browning?

14. Name several great men who were born in the same year with Tennyson.

15. What are the dates bounding the periods of Tennyson's production? Give the titles of two chief poems in each period.

16. What are the chief qualities of the poetry of Tennyson?

17. Do you prefer story or picture in Tennyson?

18. Commit to memory one of the songs in *The Princess*. Also one of the stanzas of *In Memoriam*.

19. What was the purpose of *The Princess?* The purpose of *In Memoriam?* The purpose of *Maud?*

20. Why is *Enoch Arden* so popular a story?

21. Read *The Testing of Sir Gawayne* in Marguerite Merington's "Festival Plays," and then compare the handling of the Arthurian characters with Tennyson's handling of them.

22. Name four Ballads by Tennyson.

23. After reading the section on "The Drama" (pages 329–331) analyze the structure of Tennyson's *Becket*, making a graph to illustrate your analysis.

24. Why do Browning's "Cavalier Tunes" read so easily?

25. What do you think is the purpose of Browning's *Tray?*

26. Memorize one of the songs in *Pippa Passes*.

27. What are Browning's chief religious poems?

28. Read *Evelyn Hope* and *Love among the Ruins*. Is Browning a "singer" as well as a "sayer"?

29. Name the chief poets, the chief essayists, the chief novelists, the chief historians, and the chief short-story writers of America from 1837 to 1890. Who is the greatest in each group?

READING LIST FOR THE VICTORIAN ERA

HISTORY

CARLYLE,	*History of the French Revolution.* Edited by C. R. L. Fletcher.
J. R. GREEN,	*Short History of the English People.* Revised Edition of 1899.
MACAULAY,	*History of England from the Accession of James II.* "Everyman's Library."

NOVEL

CHARLOTTE BRONTË,	*Jane Eyre.* "Everyman's Library."
DICKENS,	*David Copperfield, A Tale of Two Cities, Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby, Great Expectations, Hard Times.* "Everyman's Library."
THACKERAY,	*Vanity Fair, Pendennis, The Virginians.* "Everyman's Library."
GEORGE ELIOT,	*Silas Marner, The Mill on the Floss, Romola, Adam Bede.* Winston's "Illustrated Handy Classics."
MRS. GASKELL,	*Cranford.* Tauchnitz Edition.
RICHARD BLACKMORE,	*Lorna Doone.* Exmoor Edition.
WILKIE COLLINS,	*The Moonstone.* In the series entitled "The English *Comedie Humaine.*"
LEWIS CARROLL,	*Through the Looking-Glass,* illustrated by M. L. Kirk and John Tenniel.
CHARLES READE,	*The Cloister and the Hearth.* "Everyman's Library."
CHARLES KINGSLEY,	*Hypatia,* Illustrated by Lancelot Speed; and *Westward Ho!* — An episode from this novel selected by Edward Everett Hale, Jr.
STEVENSON,	*Kidnapped, Treasure Island.* "Everyman's Library."

MEREDITH,	*The Ordeal of Richard Feverel, The Egoist, Diana of the Crossways.* The Pocket Edition.
HARDY,	*The Return of the Native.* Tauchnitz Edition.

SHORT-STORY

DR. JOHN BROWN,	Rab and his Friends. In *Stories New and Old*, edited by H. W. Mabie.
DICKENS,	The Signal-Man. In *Mugby Junction.*
BULWER LYTTON,	The House and the Brain. In *Works.*
HENRY KINGSLEY,	Our Brown Passenger. In *Works.*
STEVENSON,	Will o' the Mill. In *Stories New and Old*, edited by H. W. Mabie.

ESSAY

MACAULAY,	Warren Hastings, Madame D'Arblay. "Everyman's Library."
CARLYLE,	*On Heroes and Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History.* Edited by Hannaford Bennett.
JOHN STUART MILL,	*On Liberty.* Edition of 1865.
ARNOLD,	Culture and Anarchy, Sweetness and Light, The Function of Criticism. In *Selections from Arnold*, edited by Lewis E. Gates.
RICHARD JEFFERIES,	*The Life of the Fields.* Edition of 1900.
NEWMAN,	*Selections.* Edited by Lewis E. Gates.
RUSKIN,	Sesame and Lilies, The Crown of Wild Olive. "Everyman's Library."
	Unto This Last, and The Two Paths, in Winston's "Illustrated Handy Classics."
STEVENSON,	*Essays.* Selected and edited by W. L. Phelps.

SCIENCE

DARWIN,	On Earthworms. In *The Function of Vegetable Mould.*
HUXLEY,	Selections from his *Works.* In Warner's "Library of the World's Best Literature."

POETRY

NEWMAN,	*The Dream of Gerontius and Other Poems.* Oxford Edition.
CHRISTINA ROSSETTI,	The Goblin-Market. In *Poems.*
D. G. ROSSETTI,	*The Blessed Damozel and Other Poems.* Edited by Hannaford Bennett.
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING,	The Cry of the Children, Portuguese Sonnets. In *Selected Poems.* Edition of 1887.
ARNOLD,	*Selections.* Edited by G. C. Macaulay.
	Sohrab and Rustum. Edited by J. H. Castleman.
TENNYSON,	Globe Edition.
BROWNING,	Globe Edition.

HELPFUL BOOKS ON THE PERIOD

Studies in Early Victorian Literature, Frederic Harrison. (Edward Arnold.)
Victorian Prose Masters, W. C. Brownell. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)
The Victorian Age in Literature, G. K. Chesterton. (Henry Holt & Co.)
Victorian Poets, Amy Sharp. (Methuen & Co.)
The Greater Victorian Poets, Hugh Walker. (Swan, Sonnenschein, & Co.)
Victorian Poets, E. C. Stedman. (J. R. Osgood & Co.)
The Romantic Movement in English Poetry, Arthur Symons. (Archibald Constable & Co., Ltd.)
Victorian Age of English Literature, Mrs. Oliphant. (Percival & Co.)
Victorian Literature: Sixty Years of Books and Bookmen, Clement Shorter. (James Bowden.)
Our Living Poets, H. B. Forman. (Tinsley Brothers.)

See also Bibliography on The Lyric, in Chapter IX, pages 385 and 386.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRESENT-DAY, 1890–

Criticism of current literature must be cautious. — In this chapter the function of the historian must be abandoned and the rôle of the journalist assumed. The journalist reports facts of his own day and interprets them as best he can, but he is not wise if he presumes to anticipate the verdicts of posterity. Experience teaches no lesson more clearly than that contemporary opinion of literature often goes astray.

Quantity. — Of making books there surely is no end to-day. In the United States alone during the year 1912 there were published 10,903 books, of which nearly 8,000 were by American authors alone. The number of books published in the whole world at the present time is estimated at 160,000 yearly. If they average only 1,000 copies each, the total number printed per year would be one hundred and sixty million, — *almost* without end. Of 1400 novels published in the United States during the year 1912 thirty were widely enough read to be considered successful from the publisher's point of view. That has been said to be about a stationary number for a period of five or more years. The New York *Sun* has estimated that out of every seven hundred and fifty manuscripts of novels offered to publishers, only one put into type becomes what is known as a "seller." Writing, therefore, and publishing, together make up both a speculative and precarious business.

Quality. — Since 1890 there has been not only a vast quantity of writing of books, but also a high quality in the writing done

by a large number of authors. The "reading public," while it does read an immense amount of material that is neither worthy in subject matter nor well handled in form, is nevertheless exacting when it is called upon to pronounce upon the qualities of what it will grant to be good literature, — or even "good reading." It demands inventiveness, characterization, probability, condensation (generally), and sympathy to be shown in what it reads. So far as it is able to understand them, the reading public demands also ethical balance, and that clear and adequate conveying of what the author has to say which we call style. All these are qualities which characterize prose fiction and drama more than any other kinds of literature; and it is the novel, the short-story, and the drama which are the popular kinds of literature of the present day.

I. The Novel

Schools of novelists. — When a novelist says that he is giving to his readers life, he means (if he understands himself) that he is presenting those readers with a copy of some of the patterns into which life is woven. Novelists since 1890 in England and in other English-speaking countries may be divided into three classes: "naturalists," realists, and romanticists. The names may not be very exact ones to suggest precisely what the differences between the various tendencies among the novel writers really are, but they are more often used than any other names.

Naturalists. — Naturalism grew up first in France, and consisted of a careful heaping of up minute details, with a restrained manner of statement in imitation of the most sober and exact scientific writing. There is but one living English writer who has succeeded in this manner so well as the French novelists,

Mr. George Moore. His *A Mummer's Wife* is the best example from this school of writing. It is not very pleasant, to say the least. The curious thing about "naturalists," "naturists," "verists," and the like in literature, is that they almost invariably turn to the coarse and low in life for their material. When accused of it, they reply, "That sort of life is a part of human existence, and we simply wish to see that all of life gets put into literature. Hitherto that part has been neglected." But it has not been neglected hitherto. Fielding, Dickens, and Thackeray dealt with it, along with other features of life. A book must be, and is at last, judged by its effect upon its readers. The effect of the handling of coarseness and vileness in human life by Fielding, Dickens, and Thackeray has been a wholesome one upon their readers. But the effect of their handling by the self-styled "naturalists" has not been wholesome.

Realists. — Then there are the "realists," who differ from the "naturalists" only in that the former eagerly look for or lead us to mourn for the absence of beauty and loveliness in the aspects of life that are sordid and unlovely and base. Among the best of realists are George Gissing, with his *Our Friend, the Charlatan*, and Arnold Bennett, with his numerous novels of the life of the "Five Towns."

Romanticists. — Lastly, there are the "romanticists," the lovers of strange things. Some of them at the present day, like Stevenson a little earlier, are infatuated with the strangeness they believe they see in familiar things. Others, such as Rudyard Kipling and Joseph Conrad, have selected from the actual experiences of their travels most of the material which fills their books with fascinating strangeness for the Anglo-Saxon reader. Incidentally it should be mentioned that though most of Mr. Kipling's great tales are taken from Anglo-Indian life, yet he lived for a year in America, and his *Captains Courageous*,

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a story of an American boy's adventures off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, is not only one of the foremost of boy stories, but is most gripping in interest to adults with any of boyish spirit left in their souls. To Kipling, also, there is nothing more full of romance than a railway engine or a steamship. Of Conrad's novels, *Lord Jim*, if not the best, is at least the most popular. To those who so curiously think of romanticism as a revival of medieval things and interests and atmosphere, and that alone, Kipling and Conrad would say, " Come, see the romance in this thing right here, this interest of *yours*, this atmosphere of just now."

Among the romanticists who still strive to restore the atmosphere of a by-gone time, there is Maurice Hewlett, with his extremely fascinating *Forest Lovers*. But H. G. Wells in modern politics find as much of passion and glamour as in politics of far-gone days; and in the strange wonders of modern science, he finds still more of glamour and romance. May Sinclair, W. J. Locke, and William De Morgan are other writers who appear to be writing the best books among the romantic fiction of our own time. De Morgan's last novel, *When Ghost Meets Ghost*, with its 862 pages, seems by its popularity to deny flatly the common cry that we can endure nothing now in literature unless it be short.

Contemporary American novelists. — Of American novelists it is especially difficult to speak with discrimination. There have been and are no such successes as Cooper and Hawthorne to attract our attention, but Frank Norris, George Washington Cable, James Lane Allen, Thomas Nelson Page, Margaret Deland, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Robert Herrick, Winston Churchill, Owen Wister, Edith Wharton, William Allen White, and, a little earlier, F. Marion Crawford, have won and held a large and enthusiastic audience of thoughtful readers. Had

Frank Norris lived beyond his thirty-seven years, and had he continued in his development of grasp upon the breadth of American life as a whole, there might have come from his pen "the representative American novel." There are a few novelists whose books have sold more widely than those of any of the writers here named, but most of them so greatly lack universality and fineness of artistic portrayal in their work that within a few years their books are certain to be pushed off the shelves by other writers of equal temporary popularity.

II. The Short-Story

Its function. — There is no doubt that the best workmanship in literature to-day is being done upon the short-story. The popularity of the short-story is boundless. This is not due alone, or chiefly, to the brevity of the form, but to a widespread, if not fully conscious, awakened interest in artistic work that is fine and high. Here, in the short-story, is an inexpensive, ready-to-hand, quickly assimilated mode of gratifying this interest; and the short-story writers of note are doing their best to meet this newly awakened demand. A bookman in a city of over half a million people remarked recently that not over six thousand people in that city read anything but the newspaper. Perhaps that was an exaggeration; but it is the short-story that, more than any other form of literature, is leading the "tired business man" and the "domesticity-wearied woman" and the rest of them out of the daily newspaper into the fore-court, at least, of the sanctuary of literature. It is doing so by making of itself a kind of glorified journalism. In fact the majority of short-stories find their first publication in the daily or weekly or monthly "journals," — the best of them, as a rule, in the monthly magazines.

Rudyard Kipling. — Kipling, doubtless, stands at the head of present-day short-story writers. Not that he has a larger group of readers, but among all short-story writers of the present time his imaginative insight and reach of perception place him before all in probability of permanent place in literature. His *best* work is more or less psychological. The *Jungle-Book* stories reveal his thought upon the organic relationship of man with nature as a whole; and his *Brushwood Boy*, *They*, and *The Bridge-Builders*, all psychological stories, though less wide in their appeal than the stories in *Plain Tales from the Hills* and in *Soldiers Three*, are, along with *Without Benefit of Clergy*, his strongest claims to permanency in literature.

Three others. — *Tales of Unrest*, by Joseph Conrad, and *Little Novels of Italy*, by Maurice Hewlett, and *Tales of Mean Streets*, by Arthur Morrison, come only second to the stories written by Kipling in truth to the life of the human soul and in fineness of artistry in the handling of that truth.

In the colonies. — South Africa has furnished at least one superior personage in the field of brief fiction, Mrs. Olive Schreiner, whose little allegorical volume of *Dreams* is one of the choicest things in modern story-telling. Canada, also, has not been barren. Sir Gilbert Parker's novels and short-stories have their advocates for first place in interest. And the satirical stories by Stephen Leacock, who, strange as it may seem, is professor of political economy in a great university, have led to their author being called "The Mark Twain of Canada." One of Leacock's latest volumes, *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich*, is of a more thoughtful character than those which have preceded it, and may have some permanent value.

The contemporary short-story in the United States. — Writers of short-stories are legion among the writers living or but recently living in the United States. Some of the best are

Joel Chandler Harris, Thomas Nelson Page, James Lane Allen, Hamlin Garland, Mrs. Mary E. Wilkins-Freeman, and Sidney Porter (O. Henry). The place of these in the thought and heart of readers to-day is assured and would seem to be assured for all time. It is more than possible, indeed, that many others will reach the coveted honor of permanent position in the pages of literary history. The short-story has not been better or more interestingly written in any other country in the world than it has in America.

III. The Drama

Value of reading plays. — The late years of the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth centuries have seen a remarkable revival of interest in the "literary drama," due largely to the desire of cultivated people to have more leisured acquaintance with the mind of dramatic writers than the "two hours' traffic of the stage" will allow: due also to the fact that there is an increasing number of persons who believe that they secure much greater enjoyment from the seeing of a play in the theater if they are already made familiar with the subject matter of the play by having read it; and due, further, to the fact, however unexplainable, that there exists a growing number of writers who have the dramatic spirit, but who lack the power of technical dramatic construction necessary for adaptation to the requirements of the stage.

Present-day playwrights. — Of dramas not well adapted to the stage, but excellent for reading, those written by Stephen Phillips have attracted most attention. They are richly poetic in conception and in the handling of details, and their stories are powerful and interesting. If one were to give a brief list of present-day English dramatic writers, the list would certainly include Sir Arthur Pinero, Henry Arthur Jones, Bernard Shaw,

John Galsworthy, Granville Barker, Alfred Sutro, Arnold Bennett, and J. M. Barrie. All of these have been greatly influenced by the technique of Henrik Ibsen, the Norwegian dramatist, the greatest playwright of modern times. It is not easy to say who is to rank highest among these dramatists; but none has excelled Sir Arthur Pinero in technique, none Mr. Shaw in cleverness of satire, and none Mr. Barrie in charm, — perhaps none Mr. Jones in naturalness of dialogue, in one or two of his plays. Mr. Barker has his strong advocates who place him in the front rank of dramatists.

The Irish playwrights. — A few young enthusiasts in Ireland during the later years of the nineteenth century became enamored of the delicate methods but rather moody tone of some French writers of years a little earlier, and they practiced those methods upon the traditions of Celtic life. Out of this and other movements arose what has been called the "Celtic Renaissance." Among the chief writers of this revival of Irish literature were W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, and John Millington Synge. St. John G. Ervine stands only second to them in quality of work.

The best writing of these has been in the field of drama. The brief plays by Lady Gregory are unfailing in their charm and in their accuracy to the life of the contemporary Irish peasants. Few creations excel in quiet humor and adroit keenness of gentle satire *The Pot of Broth* by W. B. Yeats, and few national allegories are superior to his *Cathleen ni Houlihan.* But it is the dramas of J. M. Synge of which one may speak with positiveness. His character study in *The Playboy of the Western World* is too well-known to need more than remark, and yet there are at least three others of his productions which are of much more certain value than it, namely, *The Well of the Saints, Riders to the Sea,* and *Deirdre of the Sorrows.* The first is one of the greatest masterpieces in the gently ironic

treatment of the futility of fulfilled desire in the life of man; the second passes before our vision the simplest and yet most poignant of human sorrows; and the third ranks even now among the leading modern triumphs in the use of the old mythology.

Drama in America. — America's pioneer in worth-while drama was Bronson Howard, who was born in Detroit in 1842 and was buried there in 1908. His work was done in large measure before the period of the present day, though he was writing dramas as late as 1906. Almost the only things that could get themselves produced upon the American stage before Howard were violent adaptations of French plays. Howard ended all that.

He was a pioneer in three ways. First, he was the first professional dramatist in America to give his life exclusively to the writing of plays. Second, he set upon the stage, for the first time successfully, aspects of American life. *The Henrietta*, (now playing as *The New Henrietta*), *Saratoga*, and *Shenandoah* are ample proof of his success. What is sometimes thought to be the special American brand of proof is that the production of *Shenandoah* alone made Mr. Charles Frohman the foremost of American producing managers, paid Howard over one hundred thousand dollars in one year, and netted him a total of not less than a quarter of a million dollars in royalties. Howard was a pioneer, in the third place, in a way less to be commended, in that he set the fashion in America for farce-comedy with music, by his play entitled *Fun in a Green-Room*.

Between 1864 and 1906 Bronson Howard produced but nineteen plays, and two of these (the only two unsuccessful ones) were in collaboration with other writers. He was a model workman. He said that he seldom put pen to paper for the first three months of preparing a play, and that it took, generally,

two years to produce one play, — a slight commentary upon those craftsmen who think it can be done in three weeks or less. Furthermore, he never put a word of dialogue into the mouths of his characters until, upon a series of cards with squares, one card for each scene, he had worked his characters about until every one of them knew his place, — another commentary. American business is the central interest in nearly all of Howard's plays.

Clyde Fitch produced fifty and more plays, most of them dealing with family life as affected by city life. His plays most worthy of mention are *The Truth*, *The Climbers*, *Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines*, *The Stubbornness of Geraldine*, *The Girl with the Green Eyes*, *The Moth and the Flame*, *Her Own Way*, *The Cowboy and the Lady*, *The City*, *Nathan Hale*, *Barbara Frietchie*, and *Beau Brummel*. *The Climbers* is one of the foremost American dramas. Fitch's work is nearly all melodramatic, — but so was that of Shakespeare. *Beau Brummel* is a play which will long be read, even should it never be acted again. It has a great deal of literary flavor and literary power.

A third American dramatist of excellent standing (as a writer of poetic dramas rather than stage plays, however) is Mrs. Olive Dargan. *Lords and Lovers* is her best drama. Her work is chiefly in the line of historical plays. She is very ambitious, dealing with ancient, medieval, and modern history, with history in Greece, in the Mediterranean islands, in Russia, in England, and in Mexico. Her plays are highly poetic, with some very beautiful passages within them. Her models are, quite evidently, the Shakespeareans. There is but little humor in her, but an occasional glint of it attracts the attention of the reader, as when in *The Shepherd*, Adrian exclaims, "I wonder if God understands women!" — and the Princess

Travinski replies: "Oh, some of them. The rest He made to puzzle over when eternity hangs on His hands."

It can hardly be said of these three American dramatists that they

> Tease us out of thought
> As doth eternity,

but they stimulate us to thought; and they are very wholesome. They never urge upon us "To remember to forget that there are any such things as sunshine and music in the world."

William Gillette, Charles Klein, Augustus Thomas, William Vaughan Moody, Percy Mackaye, Eugene Walter, Edward Sheldon, Charles Kenyon, George Ade, are familiar names to America theater-goers and readers of the drama, most of them still earnestly working to place the American theater and the American drama upon a high level as teachers and as lighteners of the burdens of our life.

IV. Poetry

To speak with emphasis of contemporary poetry is always a precarious thing to do. "For the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment," said Matthew Arnold in *Essays in Criticism*. Upon neither the man nor the moment of our own day in literature are we so competent to pass unimpeachable judgment, favorable or otherwise, as upon men and moments past, just as we are not competent to pass unprejudiced judgment upon many things near to us, — our relatives, for example. It might seem that the Laureateship would determine to some degree the relative standing of at least one poet at any given time. But when we look at the list of the laureates during the nineteenth century, — Henry James Pye, Southey, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Alfred Austin, Robert

Bridges, — it is at once clear that the poet laureate is not always the foremost English poet. Henry James Pye is unknown to-day, except to the most erudite of students. Alfred Austin will be read by a few leisured people for his *Lucifer*, a fairly good drama. Robert Bridges, the present laureate, will never displease any one, however few he may please.

There are several living English poets whose names may survive; a few of them are sure to do so. Some of those who have written poetry will survive for other reasons than for the production of poetry, — Thomas Hardy, the novelist, for example. A few of the lyrics of Gerald Gould are likely to pass successfully through the ordeal of time. Some of the one-act dramatic pieces of Wilfrid Gibson in the volume called *Daily Bread* are original in story and touching for their pathetic feeling. *The Collected Poems* of Rupert Brooke, who died in service during the Dardanelles campaign in 1915, have attracted much attention. Alfred Noyes has taken high place in opinion and in affection for his *Drake* and his *Tales of the Mermaid Inn*. John Masefield has attempted drama, but not very successfully. He is, though, achieving triumphs at the present time in his long narratives in verse. His *The Widow in the Bye Street*, *The Everlasting Mercy*, and, more especially, *The Dauber* and *Daffodil Fields*, are versified stories, each of which one is likely to read with breathless interest at a single sitting, — a most unusual thing to do with a long narrative poem. *The Dauber* has some of the very best of descriptions of the sea, and *Daffodil Fields* has been compared favorably with another poem of similar subject matter, *Enoch Arden*. William Watson is also a popular poet, his poem upon *Wordsworth's Grave* being of special merit.

But it is Rudyard Kipling who stands at the head of the list of English living poets in the opinion of most of those who are competent to judge. His writings might be said to come under

such a heading as that of "Anglo-Indian Literature," or the literature of British India, so far as a large number of his poems are concerned. His *Departmental Ditties* are descriptive of the rather ridiculous side of East-Indian life, and his *Barrack-room Ballads* also deal with life in India more than elsewhere. The *Barrack-room Ballads* are his most musical verse. Kipling is lauded for his patriotism, but occasionally such epithets as "sentimental athleticism" and as "bad taste" appear to fit his mood more than any other description does. Much of his verse is not very original in its measures. It is modeled after Swinburne. Yet in the greater part of his poetry he gave his readers new material to think of and to enjoy. At least *A Song of the English* and *The Recessional* are poetic in high degree, and not local, but "imperial." These belong to English literature without question and without qualification.

Anglo-India. — In the literature of Anglo-India should be considered the poem by Sir Edwin Arnold entitled *The Light of Asia* (1888). Its author attempted with his fine descriptive powers and faculty for beautiful versification to enlist the sympathy of Europeans with the teachings of Buddha. The poem became very popular, though it did not have quite the full effect he intended. His *The Light of the World* (1891) retells in verse of unusually fine melody the familiar stories of the life of Jesus, giving to them an Oriental air which the reader often fails to secure from the Biblical translations. If Kipling is a first-rate Anglo-Indian poet, and Sir Edwin Arnold not less than a second-rate one, Sir Alfred Lyall is at the very least a third-rate one. He reveals that he knew a great deal of the Anglo-Indian, or Englishman in India, and of the native, too, in a volume of poems published in 1889, entitled *Verses Written in India*. Mrs. F. A. Steele's work as a novelist is worthy of mention, especially in the novel entitled *The Potter's*

Thumb. Mr. Edward F. Oaten, in a volume upon *Anglo-Indian Literature*, names not less than one hundred and forty-one writers of Anglo-India, but he has difficulty in persuading the reader that many of them are of importance. Perhaps a native Bengalese should be mentioned, Rabindranath Tagore, for he has translated into excellent English many of his own poems. His dramatic works appear much superior to his lyrics. *The King of the Dark Chamber* is a drama notable for beautiful picturesqueness, subtle symbolism, and high ethical worth.

Canada. — In Canada two writers of poetry have displayed the singing quality in thoughtful verse, Charles G. D. Roberts and Bliss Carman. The latter's *Low Tide in Grand Pré*, 1893, and other volumes have given their author well-deserved fame as one whose feeling for the life of the lovely world which is man's home is a feeling akin to that of nature's own moods.

Australia. — Since we are upon the field of colonial literature, Australia may here be mentioned. (We have already spoken of a South African writer (see page 341).) Australia has not been fertile in literature of much value. If being an author's land of birth could count as a claim upon the author, Australia could claim Mrs. Humphry Ward, but her writings have not dealt with the life of Australia; they have been confined to England's life. Henry Kingsley wrote delightfully of Australian life, but was neither native born nor long in residence there. That colony has good claim to but three prominent men of letters: Adam Lindsay Gordon, Henry Clarence Kendall, and Marcus Clarke. The first two were local poets of excellence, the third a novelist of considerable note. All three, however, did their work during the Victorian era.

The United States. — Contemporary poetry in the United States has reflected the eagerness of its writers to experience life in full measure and to understand it with sympathy. The

life they have desired to feel and know so well has been both that of humankind and of the physical nature which has been background and inspiration for the life of man. The moods and thoughts of men and women, the sorrows and delights of childhood, and the beauty and vitality of landscape have found expression in the lyrical verse of Richard Watson Gilder, George Edward Woodberry, Edwin Markham, James Whitcomb Riley, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Eugene Field, and Cale Young Rice. All of these and many others have endeavored to express the thought, feeling, and emotion which life has aroused within them, and have added something of worth to the pages of that which gives so much abiding consolation and inspiration to the human mind, — literature.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What can you say of the number of books being published to-day? What of their quality?

2. What are to-day the three most popular types of literature? Which one appeals to you most, and why?

3. Novelists of to-day may be divided into what classes? Upon what principle is the classification based?

4. What seems to you to be the main differences between the novels of our own time and those of three quarters of a century ago?

5. Why is the short-story so very popular now? Give three reasons.

6. Name a dozen magazines which include fiction in their pages, and divide them into groups according to the quality of their short-stories.

7. Who are the most prominent present-day playwrights? Give the title of a play by each.

8. Give the title and author of each of the one-act plays which you have read.

9. Compare the short-story, the one-act play, and the brief story-telling poem, as effective media for narrative.

10. Of living poets, who is your favorite? Why? What of his poetry can you repeat from memory?

11. In so far as you are familiar with the present-day literature of England and America, that produced in which of the two countries appeals to you the more deeply? Why?

READING LIST FOR THE PERIOD OF THE PRESENT DAY

(This list includes some titles from American as well as English writers.)

THE NOVEL

ARNOLD BENNETT,	*The Old Wives' Tale.*
RUDYARD KIPLING,	*Captains Courageous.*
WILLIAM DE MORGAN,	*Alice-for-Short.*
W. J. LOCKE,	*Septimus.*
JOSEPH CONRAD,	*Lord Jim.*
WINSTON CHURCHILL,	*The Crisis.*
OWEN WISTER,	*The Virginian.*
MARGARET DELAND,	*The Iron Woman.*

THE SHORT-STORY

RUDYARD KIPLING,	*.007, The Brushwood Boy.*
MAURICE HEWLETT,	*The Madonna of the Peach-Tree.*
THOMAS HARDY,	*The Three Strangers.*
OLIVE SCHREINER,	*Dreams.*
O. HENRY,	*A Municipal Report.*
	The Ransom of Red Chief.
HAMLIN GARLAND,	*Main-Travelled Roads.*
JAMES LANE ALLEN,	*King Solomon of Kentucky.*

THE DRAMA

JOHN GALSWORTHY,	*The Pigeon.*
ARNOLD BENNETT,	*Milestones.*
J. M. BARRIE,	*Rosalind.*
GRANVILLE BARKER,	*Prunella.*
W. B. YEATS,	*The Pot of Broth.*
J. M. SYNGE,	*The Well of the Saints.*
ST. JOHN HANKIN,	*The Cassilis Engagement.*
SIR ARTHUR PINERO,	*Letty.*

William Vaughan Moody,	*The Great Divide.*
Israel Zangwill,	*The Melting Pot.*
Clyde Fitch,	*Nathan Hale.*

POETRY

Alfred Noyes,	*Tales of the Mermaid Tavern.*
John Masefield,	*The Dauber.*
Rudyard Kipling,	*Departmental Ditties.*
Stephen Phillips,	*Marpessa.*
James Whitcomb Riley,	*An Old Sweetheart of Mine.*
Paul Laurence Dunbar,	*Ere Sleep Comes Down to Soothe the Weary Eyes.*

THE ESSAY

A. C. Benson,	*Habits.*
H. G. Wells,	*The Discovery of the Future.*
James Bryce,	*National Characteristics as Moulding Public Opinion.*
E. V. Lucas,	*Concerning Breakfast.*
Samuel McChord Crothers,	*The Gentle Reader.*

HELPFUL BOOKS ON THE PERIOD

English Literature, 1880–1905, J. M. Kennedy. (Stephen Swift & Co.)

Treasury of Canadian Verse, Theodore H. Rand. (William Briggs.)

Anglo-Indian Literature, Edward F. Oaten. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, & Co., Ltd.)

The Drama To-Day, Charlton Andrews. (J. B. Lippincott Company.)

The Development of Australian Literature, Turner & Sutherland. (Longmans, Green, & Co.)

Irish Plays and Playwrights, C. Weygandt. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

The Great English Short-story Writers, W. J. & C. W. Dawson. (Harper and Brothers.)

American Writers of To-day, Henry C. Vedder. (Silver, Burdett, & Co.)

Some American Story-Tellers, F. T. Cooper. (Henry Holt & Co.)

Some English Story-Tellers, F. T. Cooper. (Henry Holt & Co.)

See also Bibliography on The Short-story, in Chapter IX, pages 392 and 393.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHIEF TYPES OF LITERATURE

Their names. — The chief types of literature are the Epic, the Drama, the Essay, the Novel, the Lyric, and the Short-story. History, biography, philosophy, science, oratory are also immensely important. They are so important that literature would be worthless if they did not exist, for literature is based upon them, and yet very few histories, biographies, systems of philosophy, scientific treatises, or orations do not "have their day and cease to be," while permanency is an essential quality of what we call literature.

Their historical order. — Each of these types of literature was a dominant type at some one time in the history of English literature, though at the present time Drama, Novel, and Short-story rival each other in popularity, with the Short-story, perhaps, in the lead. The following table will be convenient in helping one to remember the periods during which the types became very important. It should be remembered, however, that in the case of the Epic the period in which it came to be very important did not give the greatest English epic. The greatest English epic is Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and that was written during the seventeenth century. Also it should be remembered that the Essay was not *most* important at the time when it became "very important." The essay was most important during the nineteenth century in the hands of Macaulay, Carlyle, Ruskin, and others, but it first came to be very important in the eighteenth century. So that the following table

is not intended to show when the types, in each case, were of greatest importance, but merely when they rose to be the temporarily dominant type and at the same time were very important.

The Epic,	Anglo-Saxon and Middle English Periods.
The Drama,	Renaissance Period.
The Essay,	Eighteenth Century (first half).
The Novel,	Eighteenth Century (second half) and Early Nineteenth Century.
The Lyric,	Victorian Era.
The Short-story,	The Present Day.

The *logical* time to begin the study of each of the types would be at the close of the study of the historical development of the literature during each of these periods, as indicated above, though it is not likely always to be convenient to begin at such points.

I. The Study of the Epic

Kinds of epic. — The one distinctive mark of the epic upon which all agree is its narrative character. All poems whose purpose is *primarily* to tell a story are called epical. In many lyrics there is story, but the primary purpose of the lyric is not to tell the story. (See the section on The Lyric, pages 379–386.) All dramas tell stories, too, but the purpose of drama is primarily to show the reader characters in a certain situation. (See the section on The Drama, pages 359–366.)

The truest form of epic is sometimes called the "Grand" epic, sometimes the "authentic" as opposed to the "literary" epic. Sometimes writers speak of the "authentic" epic as something that has "grown," while the "literary" epic is spoken of as having been "made." The grand epic is always a long poem. The grand epic has grown directly from the folk-

stories of the early national life of a people. The *Iliad* of Homer is a complete national epic of the country of Greece, consisting of a series of stories which were passed about by word of mouth from one group of people to another until Homer, or "the weaver," wove the songs together into one fabric. The Teutonic *Nibelungenlied* is also a national epic, but less poetically perfect than the *Iliad*. In the tales about King Arthur in Britain there existed the material for another complete national epic, but it has never been written.

The *Æneid* of Virgil and the *Paradise Lost* of Milton are excellent examples of grand epics, but they can hardly be called "authentic," because they were deliberately invented or made by writers in all their details and not composed of material furnished the writers by the singers of folk-stories. But while they are "literary" epics, they also are long poems. "The epic poet is like a painter who has to fill a large stretch of canvas, or he is like a sculptor who has to mold a colossal statue, or he is like a musician who has to fill a wide space with sounds." Therefore he always works upon a large scale.

Characteristics. — Underlying every great epic poem there is a struggle, amounting to a war between right and wrong. This is obvious in the grand epics we have already mentioned. Even in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, which consists of stories and scenes from the unwritten Arthurian epic, there is the war between right and wrong, disguised in the form of allegory. Tennyson himself in the epilogue describes his work as an

> old imperfect tale
> New-old, and shadowing Sense at war with Soul.

The great epic, whether "authentic" like the *Iliad* and the *Nibelungenlied*, or "literary" like the *Æneid* and the *Paradise Lost*, has a noble theme. Its theme is based upon the legends

of mythology and is always more or less religious in its nature. Its characters are heroic. They are gods, demi-gods, and heroes. The construction of the grand epic is simple, consisting of a series of stories strung like pearls upon the strand of the life of some great chief among the heroic personalities in the poem. Episodes, or stories that can be detached from the context and yet be complete stories, abound. The action is leisurely, though at times very vivid and tense.

The following classification of epic poems will indicate the chief kinds of epics besides the grand epic. It is only the older ballads that approach the grand or "authentic" epic in spontaneity.

GREAT EPICS

The Iliad,	Homer. (Pope's Translation.)
The Odyssey,	Homer. (Bryant's Translation.)
The Æneid,	Virgil. (Dryden's Translation.)
Beowulf,	(Unknown.)
The Divine Comedy,	Dante. (Longfellow's Translation.)
Paradise Lost,	Milton.
Paradise Regained,	Milton.

MOCK EPIC

The Rape of the Lock,	Pope.

TALES

The Canterbury Tales,	Chaucer.
Enoch Arden,	Tennyson.
Tales of the Wayside Inn,	Longfellow.
Tales of the Mermaid Tavern,	Noyes.

BALLADS

Robin Hood Ballads,	(Unknown.)
Chevy Chase,	(Unknown.)
Sir Patrick Spens,	(Unknown.)

The Ancient Mariner,	Coleridge.
The King's Tragedy,	Rossetti.
The Defence of Lucknow,	Tennyson.

ROMANCES

The Lady of the Lake,	Scott.
The Idylls of the King,	Tennyson.
Hiawatha,	Longfellow.
Daffodil Fields,	Masefield.
The Song of Roland,	(An Epic Legend. Old French—author unknown.) (Isabel Butler's Translation.)

SOME BRIEF STORY-TELLING POEMS

Bishop Hatto and his Mouse Tower,	Robert Southey.
Lady Clare,	Alfred Tennyson.
St. George and the Dragon (Old Ballad),	(Unknown).
The Glove and the Lions,	Leigh Hunt.
The Pied Piper of Hamelin,	Robert Browning.
The Goblin Market,	Christina Rossetti.
The Owl and the Pussy-Cat,	Edward Lear.
Lord Ullin's Daughter,	Thomas Campbell.
King Canute,	W. M. Thackeray.
Hart-Leap Well,	William Wordsworth.
Sohrab and Rustum,	Matthew Arnold.
The Leak in the Dike,	Phœbe Cary.
Paul Revere's Ride,	H. W. Longfellow.
The Enchanted Shirt,	John Hay.
The Wonderful "One-Hoss Shay,"	O. W. Holmes.
King Solomon and the Bees,	J. G. Saxe.
Brier-Rose,	H. H. Boyesen.
The White-footed Deer,	W. C. Bryant.
The Brown Dwarf of Rügen,	J. G. Whittier.
Dara,	J. R. Lowell.
The Shoes of Happiness,	Edwin Markham.
Skipper Ireson's Ride,	J. G. Whittier.

QUESTIONS

Did the epic you are now reading grow from folk-stories or was it made at once?

What makes it an epic?

Does the story begin at the beginning of the related events, or where in the course of events?

How much time is occupied by the action, and what is the date?

Do the episodes belong to the story? Precisely what is an "episode"?

How much of the supernatural is there in the story? How does that element affect the story in its progress?

Is a moral to be found in this epic? What is the moral, if there is one?

If the poem is not a "grand" epic, what epic quality does it possess?

How do you classify the poem among the minor forms of epic, if it is not a "grand" epic?

Does it interest you? Why?

How can you determine the kind of man the author is?

Why is there no great American epic?

Where would you go to find an epic of the last decade?

Find recently written examples of mock-epic, romance, ballad, or tale. Are they good? In what way?

Take the last story-poem you have read, and answer these questions concerning it: What has the author done? How has he done it? Was it worth while doing?

BOOKS THAT WILL AID IN THE STUDY OF THE EPIC

The Book of the Epic, H. A. Guerber. (J. B. Lippincott Company.)
National Epics, Kate N. Raab. (A. C. McClurg & Co.)
The Epic, Lascelles Abercrombie. (Martin Stecker.)
The Ballad, Helen M. Cohen. (Columbia University Press.)
The Popular Ballad, Francis B. Gummere. (Houghton, Mifflin, & Co.)
A History of Epic Poetry, John Clark. (Oliver & Boyd.)
English Epic and Heroic Poetry, W. Macneale Dixon. (J. M. Dent & Co.)
The Heroic Age, H. Munro Chadwick. (Cambridge University Press.)
Forms of English Poetry, C. F. Johnson. (American Book Company.)
Handbook of Poetics, Francis B. Gummere. (Ginn & Co.)
Epic and Romance, W. P. Ker. (Macmillan & Co.)

II. The Study of the Drama

The life of the English people found most complete expression in the drama during the time of Elizabeth. At that point of time in the historical growth of English literature, therefore, the drama as a type might well be studied. If it is studied at that point, the pupil should be guided in applying to modern drama the laws discovered in his study of the classics of the age of Elizabeth and Shakespeare. Of course he must be careful to distinguish between laws or principles on the one hand and convenient practices on the other hand. For example, he must not think that, because he finds the Elizabethan drama divided into five acts in volumes printed to-day, the drama has, therefore, always been so divided, or even was always so divided in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries or is generally so divided now. The fact is that some of the Shakespearean plays were not divided into five acts; also that many of the best plays to-day have only four and even as few as three acts, and that even the one-act play seems about to become a very popular thing.

The drama defined. — The basic principle of the drama is action. The drama is that form of literature which by means of dialogue alone develops characters through a series of minor crises which make up one great crisis in the life of those characters. The central figure in each drama is consumed with desire for something, which is striven for with all the intensity of his being; but he is blinded in some way, either as to the possibility of getting what he wants or as to the best way in which to strive for it.

Tragedy. — In all tragedy the free will of the individual is involved. When the chief figure's free will clashes with insurmountable obstacles, such as fate or Providence, or the laws of

nature, either within himself or without, there is tragedy, and, usually, death. The hero is, in fact, defeated in advance. Necessity without, freedom within, make tragedy.

Comedy. — But if the obstacles are not absolutely insurmountable, if the conditions are equalized, if two human wills, or a human will and its environment, are set in opposition and the outcome is a happy one, then we have comedy.

General structure. — The plan upon which plays are *usually* built consists of five parts, commonly called (1) the exposition, (2) the development or rising movement of the action, (3) the climax, (4) the falling action, and (5) the catastrophe, or outcome. These parts are not always of proportionate length. In some plays the climax comes near the middle, the descending action and the outcome occupying almost the whole of the second half of the play. In others the climax is found near the end of the play, the descending action and outcome being presented in a very brief and abrupt manner.

The exposition has two purposes: first, to look backward and clear away the mists of uncertainty, and thus to make the critical situation plain; and, second, to look forward, thereby making the opening scene an organic part of the play. Occasionally the full exposition does not come at the beginning of the play, but is brought in much later, as in *Hamlet* and in *The Tempest*. At times it happens that the exposition or explanation of antecedent circumstances leading to the critical situation in the play is so gradual that we do not get in all of the exposition until nearly through the play. This is the case in Ibsen's *The Lady from the Sea*, one of the few of his plays which ends pleasantly. This is an example of " retrospective " drama.

The upward movement of the action may be represented by a zigzag line of ups and downs, but constantly tending upwards.

It usually begins in the middle of the first act and continues through the second act into the third. It must be natural and logical, that is, it must be an outgrowth of the situation suggested at the beginning of the play, and must lead inevitably to the climax.

From the beginning of the complicating movement to the climax, suspense gradually increases. Suspense is the result of the conflict of the hero with the obstacles which lie in his path. The playwright must take the audience or reader into his confidence. In a serious play the spectator is not to be surprised too strongly; he must be prepared for the outcome. He is led to know; but his suspense arises from the fact that the hero is struggling and from the fact that to the hero the outcome of this struggle is uncertain. Everything in the play centers about the climax. The climax is the focal point of all preceding and of all succeeding action.

There is danger that the auditor or reader will find the concluding act of the play stale, flat, and unprofitable. "The prime function of the last act is to show the outflow of the situation already laid down and brought to its issue in the preceding acts of the drama." In the catastrophe, tension must be conserved, although suspense is well-nigh over. The obstacles to the closing of the play are most often removed one at a time. The effect should be that of artistic finish and finality.

The characters. — The characters of a great play furnish an interesting source of study and insight into human nature. If the play represents a long period of time, we see the individual develop as time makes its changes. But it is not necessary that the time should be long in order to see character development in a play. Sometimes we live more in an hour than in years of humdrum existence. In any play worth while, there is character revelation. The mind and heart of the hero are laid

open as he meets the crises of life. As the play progresses he is disclosed more and more, he is developed or brought out as the photographer's negative is developed in the chemical solution, until at the end we see him as he is.

The situation. — The good drama is built about a situation. You are riding upon a street-car. You become interested in some man across the aisle. You are looking at him rather steadily. Suddenly a peculiar expression, of dismay, or terror, say, comes across his face, he hurriedly rings the bell, and hastens stumblingly from the car. That is an incident. It may do for an incident out of which dramatic events grow. But it is really the state of mind in which that man was when he looked terrified and withdrew so hastily that is dramatic. He was evidently in a certain mental "situation," and that situation was much more important than the incident of leaving the car. An incident is an event, while a situation is a state of being; and the tragic or the comic is a state of mind, not an event.

The modern theater. — It should not be forgotten that plays are written primarily to be acted in the theater. No study of the drama, however brief, can fail to take into consideration the modern playhouse, with its artistically conceived stage settings, fitting music, wonderfully manipulated lights, and facilities for quick shifting of scenery. The dramatist of to-day has opportunities of this sort denied to Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

Judging plays. — The study of the great classic dramas of English literature reveals the laws and principles already set forth. The plays of Shakespeare furnish material for a lifetime of study, but few persons can give much of time to them. Many will see many more plays than they will read. Most of these plays will deal with the life of our own day. Some of them will be worthy, some will not. It is well for the student to

examine a few modern plays in the light of his knowledge of the classics, in order, by testing them, to discover if they are worthy. Here is a list of plays for study, followed by suggested questions:

The Jew of Malta,	Marlowe.
King Lear,	Shakespeare.
Macbeth,	Shakespeare.
Hamlet,	Shakespeare.
Othello,	Shakespeare.
Romeo and Juliet,	Shakespeare.
Julius Cæsar,	Shakespeare.
King Richard III,	Shakespeare.
The Merchant of Venice,	Shakespeare.
As You Like It,	Shakespeare.
A Midsummer Night's Dream,	Shakespeare.
Twelfth Night,	Shakespeare.
Every Man in His Humour,	Jonson.
The Silent Woman,	Jonson.
She Stoops to Conquer,	Goldsmith.
The Rivals,	Sheridan.
The Lady of Lyons,	Bulwer Lytton.
Caste,	Robertson.
Becket,	Tennyson.
Strafford,	Browning.
Strife,	Galsworthy.
The Melting Pot,	Zangwill.
The Thunderbolt,	Pinero.
The Servant in the House,	Kennedy.
Their Honeymoon,	Bennett.
What the Public Wants,	Bennett
Disraeli,	Parker.
Joseph and His Brethren,	Parker.
Beau Brummel,	Fitch.
The Piper,	Peabody.
Lords and Lovers,	Dargan.
The King of the Dark Chamber,	Tagore.

ONE ACT PLAYS

The Rising of the Moon,	Lady Gregory.
Riders to the Sea,	J. M. Synge.
The Pot of Broth,	W. B. Yeats.
The King's Threshold,	W. B. Yeats.
Rosalind,	J. M. Barrie.
The Lost Silk Hat,	Lord Dunsany.
The Carrier-Pigeon,	Eden Phillpotts.

QUESTIONS

Is the play just read a tragedy or a comedy? Give your reasons.

Is there a real crisis in this play? Describe it, if so.

How is the situation made clear in the exposition? Where is the exposition in this play?

Is the situation tense enough to excite you at the very outset? What is meant by "tenseness"?

Do the past events determine the trend of the action? Explain.

Is the plot new to you?

Can you find a similar story? If so, tell it in brief.

Are there sub-plots? What purposes do sub-plots achieve?

Has the play a real struggle? Between what forces?

Does the struggle make the play? If not, what does?

Is one side entirely right, the other entirely wrong? Explain fully.

Are you pleased with the outcome of the struggle? Why?

Did you anticipate it? If so, show how.

In what other way could it end?

Is the drama adapted to the stage or is the movement too slow for representation? What changes would you suggest for adaptation to the stage?

What is the theme?

Does it appeal to popular taste? Is that a good test? Give your reasons for thinking as you do.

Is the theme developed simply? Could any scene be omitted?

How has the equipment of the modern theater influenced the development of this theme?

Are there many characters? How many? What are essential and what subsidiary?

How many different types are represented? Classify each of the characters accordingly.

Do the characters develop, or are they simply revealed?

Do they reveal themselves, or do others reveal them?

Are they worth studying? Why, or why not?

Do you know people like them? Who and where?

Where is the climax?

Is your interest held after the climax? By what?

Is any element of the story missing when the climax is reached? Supply it, if there is.

Does the play drop to an abrupt ending?

What impression did you have when it was ended?

Does that impression remain with you now? How clearly?

Would you rather see a play than read it? Why?

Is it better to read a play before or after seeing it? Give reasons.

Is the play worth while? What makes it so, or what does it lack which prevents it?

What was the author's purpose?

Did he accomplish it? Distinguish between purpose and effect.

Did he write it for the "star"? Does that help or hinder, and why?

Is it a picture of real life or fanciful?

Would the characters have acted as they do if in real life?

Does the play have a moral purpose? What is it?

Is that its chief purpose or is that one incidental?

Do you want to see or read it again? Give reasons.

Compare the one-act play with the short-story, in subject matter and in method.

BOOKS THAT WILL AID IN THE STUDY OF THE DRAMA

Play-Making, A Manual of Craftsmanship, William Archer. (Small, Maynard, & Co.)

The Appreciation of the Drama, Charles H. Caffin. (Baker & Taylor.)

The Art of Play-Writing, Alfred Hennequin. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

The Children's Educational Theatre, Alice Minnie Herts. (Harper and Brothers.)

The Play of To-day, Elizabeth R. Hunt. (John Lane Company.)

Study of the Drama, Brander Matthews. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

The Footlights, Fore and Aft, Channing Pollock. (Badger.)

The Drama, Its Law and Technique, Elizabeth Woodbridge. (Allyn and Bacon.)
Dramatists of To-day, Edward Everett Hale, Jr. (Henry Holt & Co.)
The Modern Drama, Ludwig Lewisohn. (B. W. Huebsch.)

III. The Study of the Essay

What it is. — It has already been pointed out [1] that a fairly correct definition of the essay may be reached by combining Dr. Johnson's idea of it with that of Francis Bacon. A modern critic suggests that the essay is properly employed for "indicating certain aspects of a subject, or suggesting thoughts concerning it, . . . not a formal siege, but a series of assaults, essays, or attempts upon it." He speaks of the literary essayist as the excursionist of literature, the literary angler, the meditator, rather than the thinker; but many essays are highly thoughtful indeed.

Further characteristics of the essay. — The essay has a wide range of subject matter. It may be a letter to a friend, a bit of paradox or fancy, a scene from history, or the development of a new idea or a new application of an old idea. It is often more personal than any other form of prose writing. It is much like conversation. In many essays the author seems to sit down beside us and talk with us. It is this personal element which is the most prominent characteristic of the best essays to-day. This is not so true of the Baconian type of essays. They are rather impersonal, while those after the manner of Montaigne, the French writer, are decidedly personal. The purpose of essays of the Baconian type is to instruct; they are made vehicles for the display of learning.

Critical essays. — The critical essayist endeavors to "learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world." He blames, praises, explains, analyzes, interprets. He seeks

[1] Page 7.

for truth; he seeks to "establish the facts of literature and to pass judgment on the value and significance of those facts." Criticism may be destructive in that it attempts to overthrow an accepted theory or an established reputation; or constructive in that it aims to establish new ideas and principles. No two critics ever fully agree at great length. The judgment of each is affected by his personality, point of view, and training, so that it is impossible for him to see exactly as the others do. Criticism is discussed more fully in this chapter, on pages 394–398.

The endowment of the essayist. — Since the essay is the freest and most personal of all forms of prose writing, the essayist must be richly endowed. He should have a rich imagination, a flexible style, a cheery spirit, and a large mind. He should stimulate the fancy, please with his imagery, and warm the heart with his human touch. He passes history before us in review, he judges men and nations, and he makes analyses of men's hearts and minds, — all of this requires a fine and high endowment of mind and character.

Suggestions for study of the essay. — An essay should first be read through without interruption, to secure the general idea. Then it should be read again, to get the full thought and purpose of the essayist. To determine the purpose of the essay is very important. Is it serious, humorous, satirical, fanciful? To take a humorous essay too seriously is to miss the whole point of it, though there is such a thing as serious humor. A third reading should be for the purpose of examining in detail the structure of the whole essay, the paragraph plan, and the sentence form. Notice how the writer has varied his structure to suit his purposes, how he has decorated it, it may be, and beautified his thought with imagery, how he has devised ways and means for producing the desired effects. The essay should be then read a fourth time, with the intent of discovering to

what extent the personality of the essayist appears in his work, and how much more, therefore, the essay means than it meant to the reader before examining in the full all that the writer has put into the essay. Perhaps, then, a fifth reading would repay, and in this reading, one might well consider the relationship of this essay to others of its kind, and the essayist's relationship to other essayists. Possibly many an intelligent student will get all these things in no more than a third reading, but the trained and vigorous-minded adult reader generally adds to his pleasure and profit by repeated readings.

ESSAYISTS AND ESSAYS ONE SHOULD KNOW

BACON,	Of Great Place. In *Essays: or Councils, Civil and Moral.*
JOHNSON,	The Advantages of Living in a Garret. In No. 117 of *The Rambler.*
ADDISON,	The Tory Fox-Hunter. In No. 22 of *The Freeholder.*
STEELE,	No. 132 of *The Tatler.*
SWIFT,	The Battle of the Books. In *Early Works.*
DE QUINCEY,	*Joan of Arc.*
MACAULAY,	Madame D'Arblay. In *Miscellaneous Essays.*
CARLYLE,	The Hero as Poet. In *Heroes and Hero-Worship.*
RUSKIN,	The Entry into Venice. In *Stones of Venice*; Volume II, chapter 1, sections 1 and 2.
ARNOLD,	Oxford, from the essay on Sweetness and Light. In *Culture and Anarchy.*
HUXLEY,	On a Piece of Chalk. In *Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews.*
STEVENSON,	An Apology for Idlers. In *Virginibus Puerisque and Other Papers.*
IRVING,	John Bull. In the *Sketch-Book.*
EMERSON,	Self-Reliance. In *Essays, First Series.*
THOREAU,	On Style. In *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers,* pages 130–137.
LOWELL,	On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners. In the *Atlantic Monthly,* for January, 1869.

WARNER, How I Killed a Bear. In *A-Hunting of the Deer, and Other Essays.*

SHARP, "Musrattin'." In *A Watcher in the Woods.*

LUCAS, Concerning Breakfast. In *Fireside and Sunshine.*

Two excellently representative collections of essays are the following:

Great English Essayists, Dawson and Dawson, in the series known as "The Modern Readers' Library." (Harper and Brothers.)

The Oxford Book of American Essays, Brander Matthews. (Oxford University Press.)

QUESTIONS

What is the purpose of the essay you have just read?

What is its theme?

Does it deal with a subject of universal interest? What is meant by universal interest?

Does it appeal to only one class of readers? If so, to what class?

What is the tone of the essay? Is the essayist in earnest? Is he usually in earnest in his other writings?

Is he careful of structure? Point out excellences, and defects if there are any.

Make an outline of the essay.

What different methods of paragraph development are used?

Point out the chief kinds of sentences employed.

What devices are used to secure special effects?

Does the essay charm you or repel you or are you indifferent to it, and for what reasons?

Classify the best examples of imagery in the essay.

Does it touch the heart or the intellect chiefly? Which is the more important to affect?

What are the characteristics of the author as one might learn them from this essay? Would you enjoy him as your guest?

Was *he* pleased with this essay? What is the evidence?

Do *you* think it worth reading and study? Why?

To what class of essays does this one belong?

How does it compare in value with others you have read?

IV. The Study of the Novel

Definition. — The novel is a record of action due to emotion, the story in prose of a human life touched by emotion or by passionate thought. Its distinctive function is to show the gradual development of character. Sidney Lanier, after pointing out that the novelist reveals the heart of his characters and passes judgment upon them, says, "This consideration seems to me to lift the novel to the *very highest and holiest plane of creative effort:* he who takes up the pen of the novelist assumes as to that novel to take up along with it the omniscience of God."

The statement has been made that when one or more of the chief motives of human conduct, love, valor, or religion, move men to action which ends in the achievement or failure of their purposes, the record of this action results in the romantic novel, and that when characters reveal themselves chiefly through their conversation or through what is said about them, there results the realistic novel. Exact realism in literature is impossible, but the realistic novel, with its instinct for truth, and its desire to awaken thought, attempts to present pictures of real life. These pictures are always colored, of course, by the personal equipment and experience of the author. Professor Charles F. Horne says that "The novel deals with man in his relation to his environment. Hence it must have two essentials, the man and his movements, that is, the characters and the story. The causes and effects of these two essentials give us two more. The man can move only as he is swayed internally by his emotions; and the movement can only be seen externally in its effect on his surroundings, the background. These four form the positive elements or content of the novel, and they must be presented under the limitations set by man's experi-

ence of life, or verisimilitude, and by his inadequate modes of conveying ideas, his style of speech."

We may consider the elements of a novel under five heads:

1. Theme
2. Plot
3. Characters
4. Setting
5. Author's personality

The theme. — The theme of every novel of importance is, in general, truth of some sort; the most broadly general purpose of every novel is to present truth. But truth appears in many phases. The purpose of a novel may be to give pleasure in the presentation of truth, and that is a very worthy purpose. It may aim at some evil which the author thinks should be eradicated, or at some problem to be solved. The theme may appear plainly in the book, so that we cannot forget it even if we would. It may be hidden; but it is always there.

The plot. — The plot is the weaving or tracing of a single series of events. The word "plot" in general means a secret plan. In a novel it means such a plan worked out by means of characters acting through a series of incidents to an unexpected end. Causes and consequences are woven together in a pattern. Events are traced from their beginnings to their logical ends. Nothing should be in the excellent novel that is not an organic part of the whole story. The course of the plot may be represented by a series of steps leading to a summit from which all the steps can be looked back upon, and from which the reader might be expected to understand all that he has seen. In a novel which is meant to teach a lesson, one may be expected from this summit to look into a future clearer than it would have been had not the story been told.

Another way to look at a plot is from the standpoint of the characteristics that should be present in every good story. These characteristics are adequacy of motive for the actions of the characters, conformity of the action to the nature of the characters, progression or real onward advance of movement in the action, and unity of purpose, of form, and of substance.

The characters. — Of equal importance with the plot, in the study of the novel, are the characters. The characters of a great novel stand out distinctly upon their background; they seem to live; they influence the reader as his acquaintances do. How does the author contrive to secure this effect? The characters have first lived in his brain and heart, and he reveals them to others. By setting down their speech, by showing their actions, and by reflecting their thought, he makes them known. Characters are conceived by their authors either idealized (if compared with life as it is), or natural as life itself, or as caricatured from life. There may be in a novel few or many characters. There are usually fewer than twelve. Sometimes there are many more (in Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* over three hundred); in such a case they may be considered as either principal or subordinate characters. If an author has created many strong characters of differing individuality or of different types, he is sure to rank high as a writer.

How the characters are presented should also be noted. Perhaps it may be that dress is described in detail, for the apparel oft proclaims the man. Perhaps it is some peculiarity of manner which identified the character. Sometimes the characters are introduced into the narrative suddenly, to occasion surprise. Often the reader is carefully prepared, as the audience in the theater usually is, for the entrance of the principal character. The first and last appearances of a leading or principal character are im-

portant. The minor characters also are of use, for many reasons, but chiefly because they give the novelist opportunity, by means of them, to develop his chief personages.

The development of characters is usually slow in great novels. The changes in them are made gradually by the forces at work upon them as individuals and in groups. This development follows different lines with different individuals, but the sort of growth that is most interesting to the great novelists is moral growth. It may be upward, it may be downward; but nothing holds greater interest for men and women who read than a record of the moral disintegration or the moral victory of a human soul.

The setting. — The setting or background furnishes both the stage for action and the tone of the story. If the setting is bleak, disagreeable, barren, we expect a sad tale. On the other hand, a setting beautiful, joyous, pulsating with happy life, is fitting for a story of sunshine and laughter. In a sense broader than the physical, "every touch which helps to reveal or impress the environment is background." At times the whole nation serves as setting in the novel. Again, it may be a particular locality, with all its intimate social, economic, and religious life. Sometimes by its very contrast with the personality of the characters the setting serves to make the story more impressive.

The author's personality. — Has the author kept himself out of his book? No author can do that entirely. It is of value for the student to discover how much of the author's personality may be found in his book, in order to see whether the book is better because the author is found there, or whether the author has come between the story and the reader by hindering the development of any of his characters. Generally, however much they keep themselves hidden, we come to honor the

great novelists as we read their works, because their lives have gone into the creation of their stories. They reveal themselves in every aspect of their work, — in the choice and use of words, in the structure, in the subject matter, in the spirit, and in the purpose of their books.

The following list contains a few of the great novels of British literature, and American; some of assured secondary rank; and some too recent for final judgment.

A Reading List

Robinson Crusoe,	Defoe.
Clarissa Harlowe,	Richardson.
Pride and Prejudice,	Jane Austen.
Ivanhoe,	Scott.
Quentin Durward,	Scott.
Anne of Geierstein,	Scott.
Guy Mannering,	Scott.
Waverley,	Scott.
The Antiquary,	Scott.
The Heart of Midlothian,	Scott.
Jane Eyre,	Charlotte Brontë.
Cranford,	Mrs. Gaskell.
The Last Days of Pompeii,	Bulwer Lytton.
The Cloister and the Hearth,	Reade.
Silas Marner,	George Eliot.
The Mill on the Floss,	George Eliot.
Middlemarch,	George Eliot.
Romola,	George Eliot.
David Copperfield,	Dickens.
Oliver Twist,	Dickens.
Nicholas Nickleby,	Dickens.
The Tale of Two Cities,	Dickens.
Hard Times,	Dickens.
The Newcomes,	Thackeray.
Henry Esmond,	Thackeray.
Vanity Fair,	Thackeray.

The Last of the Mohicans,	Cooper.
The Pilot,	Cooper.
The Spy,	Cooper.
The House of the Seven Gables,	Hawthorne.
The Scarlet Letter,	Hawthorne.
The Marble Faun,	Hawthorne.
Lorna Doone,	Blackmore.
Treasure Island,	Stevenson.
Tom Sawyer,	Mark Twain.
The Return of the Native,	Hardy.
The Rise of Silas Lapham,	Howells.
Captains Courageous,	Kipling.
The Crisis,	Churchill.
Alice-for-short,	De Morgan.
Septimus,	Locke.
The Amateur Gentleman,	Farnol.
The Harbor,	Poole.

QUESTIONS

What kind of novel did you last read? Realistic, or of what sort?

What was its theme? Did the author stick to it? Show how he wavered, if he did waver from the theme? Is it satisfactorily worked out?

Why did the author begin his story just where he did?

Are you satisfied with the conclusion? Why?

How would you change it, if not satisfied?

Why did the author spread the story over just the range of time he did?

Give the geography of the story.

Why is that locality employed and no other?

Did the author open up a new world to you? What kind of world?

Has he changed your views of the theme? If so, in what respects?

Do the characters impress you as living, stationary, developing?

Is there an adequate reason given for the changes in them? Point it out, if there is.

Describe the physical appearance and dress of the leading characters.

How many characters are prominent?

How many altogether?

Why did the author have precisely that number, no more and no less?

Which ones do you like? Why?

Are they strong? lovable? wholesome?

Why do you dislike others?

In what spirit are the characters handled by the novelist?

Give the plot clearly in a short paragraph.

Is the plot adequately motivated?

Does it move steadily forward?

What conflicting forces are found in the plot?

Is there a sub-plot? Outline it, and show its relation to the main plot.

Is the plot more prominent than the characters? What effect does this have?

Is the story complete, and well-balanced in its parts?

What are the elements of the setting?

How do they affect this story?

What purpose had the novelist in writing the book?

Did he accomplish it?

In what ways was it worth while?

Is it worth reading several times?

Have you tried re-reading it?

How does the author reveal himself in the book?

What kind of person is he?

What other works of his have you read?

Does he appear the same in all? Point out the differences, if any exist.

Do you recommend his books to your classmates? For what reasons?

An example of a question analysis of a novel.

THE MARBLE FAUN

VOL. I

In what terms has the author, in the first chapter, defined the general purpose of the book?

In what terms has he described the general nature of the contents?

In what way does the second chapter help to fulfill the purpose of the book, as that purpose is expressed in chapter 1?

In what way does the material in the second chapter serve to illustrate the description of the general contents as given in chapter 1?

What would be your opinion of uniting chapters 3 and 4 into one chapter?

In what respect is the "wonderful resemblance of Donatello to the Faun of Praxiteles the key-note of our narrative"?

How do present-day writers differ from Hawthorne in the use of retrospective material such as is found in chapters 3 and 4?

Note in chapter 5 the three sorts of subject matter, or, perhaps better, three sources from which subject matter comes to the artist's hand for use.

From the appreciation of Hilda in chapters 6 and 7, what terms might be employed to describe the perfect critic?

How is chapter 7 related to the plot of the story?

At least what two reasons are there for separating the material in chapters 8, 9, and 10 into three parts?

How does the chapter entitled "Fragmentary Sentences" advance the plot?

At what point in the book can we say, "Now the material for the weaving and unweaving of the plot is all in"?

Note the description of the creative process of art as it is worded by Kenyon about the middle of chapter 14. Note also the climactic effect of the incidents towards the close of this chapter.

The relationship of the portfolio of pictures, chapter 15, to following events?

What is accumulated in chapter 16 towards the bringing about of the climax of the story?

What is your opinion of the leisurely manner of presenting details in chapters 17 and 18?

The strongest scene in chapters 19–23? What are the elements of its strength?

Why end volume 1 with "Sunshine"? Does it, literally, so end? Had you any idea at the end of chapter 25 who the alms-giver was?

Suggest some things in Volume I which indicate rather closely the date of the events in the book.

VOL. II

Characterize the style of chapter 1 of volume II (chapter 26, if your book is in one volume). What is style in literature?

The significance of the last paragraph of chapter 3, vol. II?

Of points tending directly to suggest advance of the plot, how many average per chapter in chapters 1–5 of this volume?

If chapter 7 is read at once after you have finished reading chapter 6,

note the immediate arousing of the sensation of rhythmic motion, — not merely as if a journey were about to begin, but as if movement of plot were now ready to swing onward.

What in chapters 7, 8, and 9 advances the plaiting of the strands of the story?

In chapter 10, Kenyon speaks of "the crisis being what it is." Does chapter 10 contain the crisis of the story?

What purpose is served by chapters 11–16?

Note, at the end of chapter 16, the author's statement concerning the inception of the story.

Of chapters 17–20, notice how, though they have little to do with the main plot, the first and last of them bind the group of chapters to the main plot. State precisely how they do this.

Chapters 21–25 appear to be the author's attempt to bring the story to a close. Is it a successful ending?

Do you think that the story and characters are "so artfully and airily removed" from ordinary life as the author would have us believe? (See "Conclusion.")

Do you agree with Hawthorne when, in the "Conclusion," he says that he has "already sinned sufficiently" in his descriptions of Rome?

What do you think are the values of the description and exposition in the book as compared with the narrative?

BOOKS THAT WILL AID IN THE STUDY OF THE NOVEL

The Study of a Novel, S. L. Whitcomb. (D. C. Heath & Co.)

The Technique of the Novel, Charles F. Horne. (Harper and Brothers).

Essays on Modern Novelists, W. L. Phelps. (The Macmillan Company.)

Materials and Methods of Fiction, Clayton Hamilton. (Baker & Taylor Co.)

A Study of Prose Fiction, Bliss Perry. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

History of Fiction, J. C. Dunlop. (George Bell & Sons.)

A History of Story-Telling, Arthur Ransome. (T. C. & C. C. Jack.)

Principles of Criticism, Basil Worsfold. (George Allen.)

Masterpieces of the Masters of Fiction, W. D. Foulke. (The Cosmopolitan Press.)

The Development of the English Novel, Wilbur L. Cross. (The Macmillan Company.)

V. The Study of the Lyric

Of all the forms of poetry the lyric makes the widest appeal. The lyric poet gives voice in an idealized way to his inmost thought or emotion, and makes it universal by his expression. The searcher for beautiful expression of his own feeling cannot fail to find it in English lyric poetry. This lyric poetry covers the whole realm of human feeling, and has given it surpassingly beautiful form. No type of literature may be studied with more of delight, if studied with care, than the lyric. When we have, by study of the classic lyrics, acquired a taste for the best that has been said and sung, how interesting it is to search the pages of the best magazines and to examine the books upon the library shelves for current lyric poetry of real merit. To come, in an unexpected place, upon a lyric of worth which fits our mood precisely, is a delight akin to that of the discovery of a new land beyond seas. Most readers overlook the brief poems — they are mostly lyrics — in the magazines. Many of these poems are worthless; but to discover one gem expressive of our own personal thought or emotion is worth many hours of patient search.

What is a lyric? — The best lyric poetry is the product of "the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds." Stopford A. Brooke says, "The lyric proper is the product of a swift, momentary, passionate impulse, . . . suddenly waking the poet, as it were out of a dream, into vivid life, seizing upon him and setting him on fire with its grasp, . . . so that the whole poem leaps into being before it is written down." The lyric is the passionate expression, in musical form, of the mood of the lyrist.

Characteristics. — The lyric is universal in its appeal. It speaks to the heart of all mankind in some one mood. It is

usually simple in its harmonies and structure. Its story is very brief, merely a suggestion of a story. No more than is necessary is given. It is not information the lyrist seeks to impart. It is his desire to communicate his passion, — to make the reader share his mood of feeling. A lyric, whether primarily of thought or of emotion, is always impregnated with feeling. The lyric is seldom long, for the intensity of feeling cannot be long maintained. This kind of poem must be conceived in the spirit of song.

Subject matter. — The lyric poem is not confined to one theme, though love in all its relationships, human and divine, is its chief theme. The lyric reflects the entire scale of human emotion. It sings of religion, patriotism, revelry, rejoicing, suffering, and every other thing which stirs the mind and heart of man.

Forms of the lyric. — The lyric is usually found in one of the following forms: ballad, hymn, ode, elegy, threnody, sonnet, and even epigram and epitaph. Originally the lyric was always sung to the accompaniment of music upon some instrument, the lyre usually being the instrument employed; hence, the name lyric became descriptive of this song-poem. Sometimes the lyric is found within the drama and even within the epic. The ballad is nearly always chiefly narrative and hence epical. But sometimes the narrative in a ballad is incidental only and the poem becomes an expression of intense feeling; in such case the narrative poem loses its epic character and becomes a lyrical ballad. The genuine epic ballad is a folk-song; but as printed books increase, folk-songs decrease. An example of folk-song or epic ballad is the Anglo-Saxon one entitled the *Battle of Maldon*. Keats's *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* is not a genuine ballad or folk-song, but, though very beautiful, must be called an " imitated ballad." The lyrical ballad is exemplified in the old Scotch song beginning:

"O waly, waly up the bank,
And waly, waly down the brae,
And waly, waly yon burn-side
Where I and my love wont to gae."

The poetry of Burns is plentiful in lyrical ballads.

The hymn is a very old form of lyric. It sprang from the singing and dancing of primitive people in their religious rites. As the wild chantings became orderly and were reduced to intelligible words, hymns resulted. Hymns are usually patriotic, such as Byron's *The Isles of Greece*, or religious, such as Newman's *Lead, Kindly Light.*

The ode might be called a "reflective" lyric. In writing an ode the poet begins with a theme or definite idea, and his poem gives voice to his reflection upon that theme. Many odes are not very musical, — an example is Gray's *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard*, and in so far as this elegiac ode is not musical it has departed from lyrical tone. Odes are good examples of the universal appeal of poetry, for the best of them are about the greatness of some man or are the unified reflections of the writer concerning some general idea, some idea generally acceptable to most people. Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* and Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* are excellent examples.

An elegy is very like an ode; in fact, we called Gray's *Elegy* an ode. Still Gray's famous poem reflects no individual grief, scarcely any grief at all. It is rather impersonal, indeed. A true elegy is a song of grief; when it is exalted and calm, we are *likely* to call it an "ode"; when it represents acute sorrow, passionate and tumultuous, we are *sure* to call it an "elegy." Any poem which is mournful or plaintive might safely be called an elegy. No one would hesitate, at least, to call a funeral song an elegy. One of the most beautiful English elegies, though

very mild in its mournfulness, is Swinburne's *In Memory of Walter Savage Landor*. Its first two stanzas are:

Back to the flower-town, side by side,
The bright months bring,
Newborn, the bridegroom and the bride,
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,
Filled full of sun;
All things come back to her, being free;
All things but one.

The student who becomes much interested in elegies would desire to study what is technically known as "elegiac verse." He would need to consult such a dictionary as the *Century*, and such a text as Alden's *English Verse*.

The threnody is a form of ode, as its name would indicate. Another name for the threnody is the dirge. It is a song of lamentation, and therefore more limited in subject matter than the Ode proper. It is for a specific person, too, always, though the name used in the address is sometimes not the actual name of the person mourned for. The greatest threnodies in English are Milton's *Lycidas*, Shelley's *Adonais*, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, Arnold's *Thyrsis*, and Emerson's *Threnody*.

When one considers the sonnet, it is necessary to study some technical treatment of this form of poetry so popular in all languages of Europe. The sonnet originated in Italy, and was composed of fourteen lines only. The sonnet as written by Petrarch, the Italian poet of the fourteenth century, was written about one idea or emotion. It was divided into two parts, the first part consisting of eight lines, the second of six lines. The first part was subdivided into parts of four lines each, and the second part into two, of three lines each. The divisions were

clearly marked by the rhyme order. That order may be indicated thus: abba abba cdc dcd. Milton's sonnet on *The Late Massacre in Piedmont* is written according to the method employed by Petrarch. The rhyme order can easily be followed in it.

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose *bones*
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains *cold*
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of *old*,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and *stones*, ..
Forget not. In thy book record their *groans*
Who were thy sheep and in their ancient *fold*
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese that *rolled*
Mother with infant down the rock. Their *moans*
The vales redoubled to the hills and *they*
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes *sow*
O'er all the Italian folds where still doth *sway*
The triple tyrant; that from these may *grow*
A hundredfold, who having learnt the *way*
Early may fly the Babylonian *woe*.

All sonnets are either of this type or variations of it. Even this sonnet of Milton does not permit the rhyme-scheme to divide the thought exactly. The Shakespearean sonnet consists of three divisions of four lines each, and then a couplet ending the sonnet. English literature abounds in beautiful sonnets. Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Mrs. Browning, D. G. Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, Swinburne, all these are masterly in the art of compressing much that is highly beautiful into this small space of fourteen lines.

An epigram and an epitaph were originally the same thing, — a poetical inscription upon some public monument, such as a tomb. An epitaph is still written on a tombstone, or is supposed to be, but an epigram is generally too witty for such a purpose nowadays. The qualities of an epigram are best suggested in the following lines:

The qualities rare in a bee that we meet
In an epigram never should fail;
The body should always be little and sweet,
And a sting should be left in its tail.

The author of these lines is unknown. The lines upon Lady Pembroke, said by some to have been written by Ben Jonson, but now supposed to have been by William Browne, are among the loveliest of illustrations of the epitaph, —

Underneath this marble hearse
Lies the subject of all verse;
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother.
Death, ere thou hast slain another,
Wise and good and fair as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

LYRIC POETS

Spenser.	Kipling.
Shakespeare.	Swinburne.
Milton.	Watson.
Herrick.	Noyes.
Wordsworth.	Bryant.
Coleridge.	Longfellow.
Byron.	Lowell.
Shelley.	Emerson.
Keats.	Whittier.
Tennyson.	Poe.
Browning.	Holmes.
Mrs. Browning.	Lanier.
D. G. Rossetti.	Whitman.
Christina Rossetti.	Aldrich.

QUESTIONS

How do you determine whether the poem is a lyric?

Who is its author?

Do you know anything about him? What do you know from other sources than this poem, and what from it?

Do you need to know anything about him not revealed in the poem?

What is its theme?

Is it an old theme? If so, where else is it found?

Do present-day lyrists use this theme? Who are they?

What are their most common themes?

Are you interested in these themes? Why or why not?

What interests you more in the poem, — what is said or the manner of saying it?

Point out the poem's chief merits.

Name the lyrics you know by title.

Classify them as sonnets, odes, elegies, threnodies, etc.

How many can you repeat from memory?

Is time well spent in memorizing good lyrics? Why?

Have you in mind any poem that you have *made your own?* Does it give satisfactory expression to your own feeling? Recite it.

Do you pass by the lyrics in the current magazines? Why?

Did you ever have the satisfaction of discovering for yourself a good lyric somewhere? Name it. What are its good qualities? Its rhyme plan, if it has one?

What makes the verses you last read, *poetry?*

Are there any unusual combinations of images within it?

Is there any internal rhyme?

What is the purpose of rhyme?

Find a good definition of rhythm.

Does this poem help you to "find yourself," or does it divert your attention from yourself?

BOOKS THAT WILL AID IN THE STUDY OF THE LYRIC

The English Lyric, Felix Schelling. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

Lyric Poetry, Ernest Rhys. (E. P. Dutton & Co.)

English Lyric Poetry, 1500–1700, Francis I. Carpenter. (Blackie & Son.)

Lyrical Verse from Elizabeth to Victoria, Oswald Crawfurd. (Chapman & Hall.)

The Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics, Francis T. Palgrave. (The Macmillan Company.)

English Sonnets, A. T. Quiller-Couch. (Chapman & Hall.)

American Sonnets, T. W. Higginson and E. H. Bigelow. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

A Victorian Anthology, E. C. Stedman. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

An American Anthology, E. C. Stedman. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

English Verse, R. M. Alden. (Henry Holt & Co.)

Preface to the Second Edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, William Wordsworth. (Oxford Press.)

The Book of the Sonnet, 2 vols., Leigh Hunt and S. Adams Lee. (Sampson, Low, Son & Marston.)

Lectures on Poetry, J. W. Mackail. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

A Defense of Poetry, in "Essays and Letters," Percy Bysshe Shelley. (Walter Scott.)

The Poet, in "Essays, Second Series," R. W. Emerson. (E. P. Dutton & Co.)

The Sonnet, Its Origin, etc., Charles Tomlinson. (John Murray.)

VI. The Study of the Short-Story

The short-story is the latest of literary forms to be consciously studied. Only recently has its structure and technique been fully understood. It has often been confused with other forms of brief story-telling. Many definitions for it have been proposed. One among the most satisfactory is the following: it is "a brief, imaginative narrative, unfolding a single predominating incident and a single chief character; it contains a plot, the details of which are so compressed, and the whole treatment of which is so organized, as to produce a single impression."

The importance of singleness of impression in the short-story is not likely to be over-emphasized. There should be one single purpose. This, more than anything else, differentiates the short-story from most novels. The novel undertakes to present a view of life as a whole, and its purposes are often manifold and comprehensive. The short-story seizes upon one incident of life, excluding all else usually, and presents that important incident in such way as to leave the reader with a

single impression. Poe's little essay upon the *Philosophy of Composition* is eminently worth reading in this connection. In the novel, plot, character, and setting may all be fully developed. But this can rarely, if ever, be the case in the short-story; in it the emphasis should be placed upon one of these elements, though in such a story as Bret Harte's *Outcasts of Poker Flat* the author has almost accomplished the impossible and given the reader the three, inseparably blended in such fashion that it is difficult to say that one is more important than the other two.

Kinds of short-story. — The simplest classification of short-stories is as follows, —

1. The story of Action.
2. The story of Character.
3. The story of Setting (or Atmosphere).
4. The story of Idea.

In the *first*, the plot is given especial emphasis. The unfolding of the story, the action, is the main thing. Characters are there, of course, but they are not in the foreground; it is what they do rather than what they are, that interests us. Quite the opposite is true of the *second* kind of short-story. In it, one single preëminent character dominates the action. Other characters are in the story to present him with opportunity for action or to throw light in some way upon his temperament, disposition, and all the rest which aid in making up his character. The story in such case is secondary; it is useful primarily only as it provides a framework for the portrayal of the character. The setting is useful in such a story in so far as it lends tone and color to the portrayal. In the *third* kind of short-story, the setting determines the nature of the story. A bleak, poverty-stricken part of a great city suggests and makes a story of hardship and toil or misery. An old ruin of a castle overgrown with ivy suggests a story of chivalry, war, and perhaps love.

Often the writer causes the scene to serve as a contrast for the sake of *vividness* of impression; but in that case the story is likely to turn out one of action or of character. A *fourth* kind of short-story is the story of idea. The idea is a generalization from the writer's experience of life. He wishes to set forth this idea; therefore he invents plot, characters, and setting. Edward Everett Hale, for instance, was impressed with the idea of a man cut off from all national relationships, and he wrote the story of *The Man Without a Country.*

The best writers usually begin their short-stories with the conception of a character. A real, live character is pretty certain to get himself or to be gotten into critical situations of some sorts, and when he does he is sure to find a stage for action and to see that something happens. The beginner in the craft of short-story writing often mistakes the best method of getting under way, because he insists that he must first concoct a plot. He should imagine a vital character first, and action will follow. What the writer then has left to do is to select and reject from that action, and then he *may* arrange in climactic order what the character does or what is done to him, — and the plot is the *result.*

Singleness of purpose. — The most important thing to keep in mind in the study of the short-story is the oneness of aim. Nothing must hinder, nothing detract from the single, clear purpose. Strength and effectiveness are dependent upon the elimination of whatever is not germane to the purpose. A well-written short-story never contains an "episode," that is, it never contains any incident which could be taken out of the story and told for that incident's own sake without lessening the value of the short-story and of the incident itself. The good short-story must contain nothing that does not advance the characters to the one goal of the action of the story.

Short-stories for study. — Modern magazines are constantly seeking for good short-stories, but they come to our tables filled with stories, good, bad, and indifferent. How shall we sift the wheat from the chaff? By the application of principles learned in the study of short-stories of acknowledged literary value, and by practice in the culling of the good from the bad in the current magazines. The following short-stories are, among many others, worthy of close study:

The Man Without a Country,	Hale.
The Luck of Roaring Camp,	Harte.
The Great Stone Face,	Hawthorne.
The Gold Bug,	Poe.
The Fall of the House of Usher,	Poe.
The Lady, or the Tiger,	Stockton.
The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,	Irving.
Rip Van Winkle,	Irving.
Marse Chan,	Page.
Marjorie Daw,	Aldrich.
The Revolt of Mother,	Wilkins-Freeman.
A New England Nun,	Wilkins-Freeman.
A Perfect Tribute,	Andrews.
Pigs is Pigs,	Butler.
The Man Who Was,	Kipling.
.007,	Kipling.
Markheim,	Stevenson.
The Sire de Maletroit's Door,	Stevenson.
A Municipal Report,	O. Henry
The Third Ingredient,	O. Henry.
The Whirligig of Life,	O. Henry
Little French Masterpieces,	Maupassant.
Little French Masterpieces,	Daudet.
Loveliness,	Phelps.
King Solomon of Kentucky,	Allen.
The Game and the Nation,	Wister.
The Return of a Private,	Garland.
The Happiest Day of His Life,	Osbourne.

KINDS OF SHORT-STORIES

Humorous Stories

The Jumping-Frog,	Mark Twain.
The Third Ingredient,	O. Henry.
The Pope's Mule,	A. Daudet.
Pigs is Pigs,	Ellis Parker Butler.
The Love-Letters of Smith,	H. C. Bunner.
The Courting of Dinah Shadd,	Rudyard Kipling.

Stories of Character

Tennessee's Partner,	Bret Harte.
Brooksmith,	Henry James.
King Solomon of Kentucky,	James Lane Allen.
A Lodging for the Night,	R. L. Stevenson.
Tchelkache,	Maxim Gorki.
Quite So,	T. B. Aldrich.
The Marquis,	J. H. Shorthouse.
Rab and his Friends,	Dr. John Brown.
The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney,	Rudyard Kipling.

Stories of Ingenuity

The Lady or the Tiger,	Frank R. Stockton.
The Gold-Bug,	Edgar Allan Poe.
The Struggle for Life,	T. B. Aldrich.
The Diamond Lens,	Fitz-James O'Brien.

Stories of Romantic Adventure

The Man Who Would Be King,	Rudyard Kipling.
The Sire de Maletroit's Door,	R. L. Stevenson.
The Honorable Mr. Tawnish,	Jeffery Farnol.

Love Stories

The Brushwood Boy,	Rudyard Kipling.
Who Was She?	Bayard Taylor.
Marjorie Daw,	T. B. Aldrich.
The Creamery Man,	Hamlin Garland.

PSYCHOLOGICAL STORIES

The Hollow of the Three Hills,	Nathaniel Hawthorne.
They,	Rudyard Kipling.
A Coward,	Guy de Maupassant.
The Real Thing,	Henry James.

STORIES OF TERROR AND THE SUPERNATURAL

The Merry Men,	R. L. Stevenson.
Ethan Brand,	Nathaniel Hawthorne.
The Birth-mark,	Nathaniel Hawthorne.
Rappacini's Daughter,	Nathaniel Hawthorne.
The Horla,	Guy de Maupassant.
The Masque of the Red Death,	Edgar Allan Poe.
Ligeia,	Edgar Allan Poe.
The Upper Berth,	F. Marion Crawford.
The Real Right Thing,	Henry James.
The House and the Brain,	Bulwer Lytton.
The Bottle-Imp,	R. L. Stevenson.
At the End of the Passage,	Rudyard Kipling.

STORIES FINELY ILLUSTRATING DRAMATIC METHOD

The Outcasts of Poker Flat,	Bret Harte.
Le Grande Breteche,	H. Balzac.
Without Benefit of Clergy,	Rudyard Ripling.
The Three Strangers,	Thomas Hardy.
A Lear of the Steppes,	Ivan Turgenev.
The Pit and the Pendulum,	Edgar Allan Poe.
The Shot,	Alexander Poushkin.

LOCAL-COLOR STORIES

The Game and the Nation,	Owen Wister.
A Rose of the Ghetto,	Israel Zangwill.
A New England Nun,	Mary E. Wilkins-Freeman.
Up the Coulée,	Hamlin Garland.
The Rose of Dixie.	O. Henry.
The Madonna of the Peach-Tree,	Maurice Hewlett.
An Habitation Enforced,	Rudyard Kipling.
The Luck of Roaring Camp,	Bret Harte.

Stories of and for Children

Loveliness,	Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward.
A Dog of Flanders,	Ouida (Louise de la Ramée).
Wee Willie Winkie,	Rudyard Kipling.
The Jungle-Book,	Rudyard Kipling.
The Pope is Dead,	A. Daudet.
The Fairy Poodle,	Leonard Merrick.
Emmy Lou: Her Book and Heart,	George Madden Martin.
Little Citizens,	Myra Kelly.
Uncle Remus' Stories,	Joel Chandler Harris.
The Golden Age,	Kenneth Grahame.
The Wind in the Willows,	Kenneth Grahame.
The Children's Book of Thanksgiving Stories,	Asa Don Dickinson.

Fairy Stories

The Little Lame Prince,	Miss Mulock.
The Happy Prince,	Oscar Wilde.
The King of the Golden River,	John Ruskin.
The Steadfast Tin Soldier,	Hans C. Andersen.
The Story of Claus,	Eugene Field.
The Gradual Fairy,	Alice Brown.

COLLECTIONS OF SHORT-STORIES

American Short Stories. Edited by Charles S. Baldwin. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

The Book of the Short Story. Edited by A. Jessup and H. S. Canby. (D. Appleton & Co.)

Modern Masterpieces of Short Prose Fiction. Edited by Alice V. Waite and Edith M. Taylor. (D. Appleton & Co.)

Types of the Short Story. Edited by Benjamin A. Heydrick. (Scott, Foresman & Co.)

Stories New and Old. Edited by Hamilton W. Mabie. (The Macmillan Company.)

The World's Greatest Short Stories. Edited by Sherwin Cody. (A. C. McClurg & Co.)

A Collection of Short Stories. Edited by L. A. Pittenger. (The Macmillan Company.)

Representative Short Stories. Edited by Edna Perry and Nina Hart. (The Macmillan Company.)

Specimens of the Short-Story. Edited by G. H. Nettleton. (Henry Holt & Co.)

Little French Masterpieces. Edited by Alexander Jessup. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

The Short-Story. Edited by Brander Matthews. (American Book Company.)

Modern Short-Stories. Edited by Margaret Ashmun. (The Macmillan Company.)

BOOKS THAT WILL AID IN THE STUDY OF THE SHORT-STORY

The Short Story, Its Principles and Structure, Evelyn M. Albright. (The Macmillan Company.)

Short-Story Writing, C. R. Barrett. (Baker & Taylor.)

The Short Story in English, H. S. Canby. (Henry Holt & Co.)

Writing the Short Story, J. B. Esenwein. (Hinds, Noble & Eldredge.)

The Art of the Short Story, G. W. Gerwig. (The Werner Company.)

The Art of the Short Story, Carl H. Grabo. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

The Philosophy of the Short-Story, Brander Matthews. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

The Art and the Business of Short-Story Writing, W. B. Pitkin. (The Macmillan Company.)

The Plot, H. A. Phillips. (The Editor Publishing Company.)

QUESTIONS

Does the author show a clear-cut purpose when he begins to write or does it appear later? If the latter, where in the story?

What is the author's purpose?

Does he carry it out?

Is there anything in the story which hinders or detracts?

Is the theme suited to the short-story, or would it be better for a novelette?

Could it be handled better in a novel or a play? If so, why?

Is this short-story a real one, or is it simply a condensed novel?

What is the theme?

Outline the plot.

What kind of short-story is it?

Give reasons for your classification?

If it is a story of character, what relations to the characters have the plot and the setting?

Could you include the action under the formula "Impulse, deed, consequence"? Under "Enmeshment and escape"?

Find stories of each of the four kinds suggested on page 387.

Find stories of each of the ten kinds on pages 391, 392.

What is the difference between the set of four kinds and that of ten?

What is the best short-story you have ever read and why is it the best?

Who wrote it?

Where was it published?

What kind of story can you write best?

What, in your opinion, is the best brief story in verse?

What illustrator of short-stories is your favorite? Why?

Read a half dozen novelettes. What distinguishes a novelette from a short-story?

VII. Criticism

While Criticism can hardly be said to be a type of literature all by itself, for it nearly always can easily be classified under the Essay, yet since the student of literature is constantly being asked to express an opinion, or make an estimate, or pass judgment upon what he has read, it seems best to have a separate section upon Criticism. Some one has described Criticism as "the soul's adventure among masterpieces." Matthew Arnold wrote a definition of Criticism to the effect that it is the endeavor to learn and to teach others all that is best among the things known and the things that have been and are being thought in the world and thus to make fresh and true ideas popular and forceful.

The common idea of criticizing, that it is "fault-finding," is not a correct idea. John Dryden pointed this out plainly when he said, "I must take leave to tell them that they wholly mistake the nature of criticism who think its business is prin-

cipally to find fault. Criticism, as it was first instituted by Aristotle, was meant as a standard of judging well; the chiefest part of which is, to observe those excellencies which should delight a reasonable reader." Of course if what is read contains few " excellencies," or more faults than excellent qualities, then Criticism must be adverse, — it must find and state the faults.

Criticism does not consist merely in stating one's spontaneous impression, or what one merely feels or thinks offhand. A critical estimate of a piece of writing is a judgment upon that writing, not a hasty impression. It is a judgment based upon comparisons between that which has proved itself to be worth while and that which is now before one for critical opinion.

Coleridge said that the critic should ask three questions when reading: (1) What has the writer done? (2) How has he done it? (3) Was it worth while doing? No doubt all the other questions that one needs to ask *could* be grouped under these three general questions. It is worth while for you to ask these three of the next book you read.

Others have said that all critical questions can be grouped about (1) the subject matter, and (2) the manner of writing it, and (3) the man who did the writing. And so they can.

Still others have said that if the critic finds out (1) the purpose of the writer, and then (2) the effect achieved upon the reader, and then (3) compares purpose with effect, he will have accomplished the whole task of criticism.

Rudyard Kipling has written some famous lines in which he says that the story-teller is served by six honest serving-men, What and Why and When and How and Where and Who. If one applied these questions to the story which he is reading, he would be asking about (1) the nature of the subject matter, (2) the purpose of the author, (3) the circumstances of (*a*) time and (*b*) place in which the writing was done and (*c*) the setting

of the story, and, finally, (4) both concerning (*a*) the character of the author and (*b*) the characters in the story.

A critic may confine himself to only two questions even, and yet get very far into the heart of the business, — the two questions (1) Is the message conveyed by the author sane and valuable for human life? and (2) Is the art or workmanship with which the writer has produced the message fine workmanship?

Another way to criticize is this: Begin by inquiring (1) what the purpose of the author was; whether, for example, it was to entertain merely, or to instruct. Inquiring about the purpose will quickly lead one to inquiring (2) about the man and the circumstances under which he wrote. One may, with a fair degree of accuracy, simply by asking critical questions, determine the period in history in which a work has been written. He can even determine whether the work is modern or not by applying the most general tests. If a work of literature is distinguished for all four of the following qualities, beauty, directness, freedom of thought, and many-sidedness, it is *not* ancient nor medieval; it is modern, in spirit, even if not in precise date. A reader should know considerable about the time in which the writer lived, if the reader desires to understand the book fully. Matthew Arnold says, "For the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of man and the power of moment." Then (3) it is a good plan to consider the subject matter, inquiring whether it is actually true, or fanciful merely, or true to principles if not to actual facts. This, of course, involves (4) a study of the kind of discourse to which the writing belongs, whether it is a story, or a description, or an explanation, or an argument. Then (5) it is well to examine the structure of the writing being criticized. If it is, for example, a drama, or a short-story, or a sonnet, how well does it conform to the best approved methods of writing drama, or short-story,

or sonnet? Then (6) the study can proceed to the examination of the diction, or the choice and apt use of the words employed. Then (7), finally, one may well ask what permanent impression the work is likely to leave, — what, after all, is to be the effect upon the world of this which claims to be a literary product?

Let us be more direct for a moment, and say that if one is to criticize a *printed play*, for example, he may do his best critical work if he asks and answers such questions as these:

(1) What is the degree of mastery over dialogue in the play?
(2) What is the degree of mastery of character portrayal?
(3) How well does the author master the setting?
(4) Is he in this drama a master of romantic inventions or of realistic events?
(5) Has the author shown here the unfailing instinct for the dramatic which only the master playwright can have?

You see, the creation of a masterpiece can be accomplished only by a master craftsman, and all literature must be judged finally by comparison with what a master has done or may be expected to do.

We have suggested all these various ways of approach in criticism because there is *no one* way which is the *sure* way of criticizing. If, as Kipling says, there are five and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays and every single one of them is right, then the critic must have five and sixty ways of criticizing tribal lays, for criticism is simply asking "Is it right?"

BOOKS THAT WILL AID THE STUDENT TO BE A GOOD CRITIC

What Can Literature Do for Me? C. Alphonso Smith. (Doubleday, Page & Co.)

Judgment in Literature, Basil Worsfold. (J. M. Dent & Co.)

Literary Taste: How to Form It, Arnold Bennett. (George H. Doran Company.)

Wordsworth's Literary Criticism. Edited by Nowell C. Smith. (Frowde.)
Elementary Guide to Literary Criticism, F. V. N. Painter. (Ginn & Co.)
Greatness in Literature, W. P. Trent. (Thomas Y. Crowell & Co.)
The Function of Criticism at the Present Time, Matthew Arnold. (The Macmillan Company.)
Principles of Literary Criticisim. C. T. Winchester. (The Macmillan Company.)

ESSAYS ON STYLE

BEN JONSON,	*Timber.*
G. H. LEWES,	*The Principles of Success in Literature.*
ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER,	*Essay on "Style."*
HERBERT SPENCER,	*Philosophy of Style.*
RICHARD WHATELY,	*Elements of Rhetoric, Part III.*
HENRY D. THOREAU,	Pages 130–137 of "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers."
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON,	*On Some Technical Elements of Style in Literature.*
WALTER PATER,	*Essay on "Style."*
FREDERIC HARRISON,	*On English Prose.*
BARRETT WENDELL,	*English Composition.*
ARLO BATES,	"Talks on Writing English," First Series, — *Last Chapter.*
FREDERICK T. COOPER,	"The Craftsmanship of Writing" — *Chapter VII.*

VIII. LETTERS

"The stile of *letters* ought to be free, easy, and natural; as near approaching to familiar conversation as possible: the two best qualities in conversation are, good humour and good breeding; those *letters* are therefore certainly the best that show the most of these two qualities," said an old-fashioned master of literature. Students of the high school age have already been taught the form of letter-writing. They have already had practice in this kind of personal communication, outside of the

schools. Most of them begin to realize that it is not likely that there will be any other form of literature in which opportunity may come for them to show themselves masters of the craft of authorship. Few do not already know that a good-humored letter will achieve results more quickly and more efficiently than will a letter that is ill-humored. But not very many appreciate that, even in the business world, nearly all great success in correspondence is due to a combination of good humor and good breeding. The correspondence of a great business house reveals the touch of fine art in almost every letter sent from its offices. Cultured minds with keen business sense are in high demand in the world of business. As the means of communication become more numerous and rapid and the ramifications of business become more far-reaching and complex, the demand for educated correspondents will become larger and more insistent. While the subject matter of the letters of poets, essayists, and novelists is not much akin to the subject matter which fills the files of a business concern, yet a mastery of the tone and spirit of the correspondence of " men of letters " goes far towards making of business correspondence a success. Among the best collections of letters are the four following:

Selected English Letters. Edited by Claude M. Fuess. (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

Specimens of Letter-Writing. Edited by Laura E. Lockwood and Amy R. Kelly. (Henry Holt & Co.)

The Gentlest Art. Edited by E. V. Lucas. (The Macmillan Company.)

Letters from Many Pens. Edited by Margaret Coult. (The Macmillan Company.)

The few letters here printed are interesting for their variety, and will serve to suggest that occasion demands a varying tone, as well as to suggest that personality of the writer shows itself very plainly in this form of writing.

Abraham Lincoln to Mrs. Bixby

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,
November 21, 1864.

MRS. BIXBY,
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

DEAR MADAM: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Dr. Samuel Johnson to Lord Chesterfield

Feb. 7, 1755.

MY LORD,

I have been lately informed by the proprietor of The World that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was over-powered, like the rest of mankind, by the

enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre* that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a Patron before. The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the publick should consider me as owing that to a Patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been

long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation.

My Lord
Your Lordship's most humble
most obedient servant
SAM. JOHNSON.

Charles Lamb to William Wordsworth

COLEBROOK COTTAGE, April 6, 1825.

DEAR WORDSWORTH —

I have been several times meditating a letter to you concerning the good thing which has befallen me, but the thought of poor Monkhouse came across me. He was one that I had exulted in the prospect of congratulating me. He and you were to have been the first participators, for indeed it has been ten weeks since the first motion of it. Here I am then, after thirty years' slavery, sitting in my own room at eleven o'clock this finest of all April mornings, a freed man, with 441£ a year for the remainder of my life, live I as long as John Dennis, who outlived his annuity and starved at ninety; 441£, *i.e.*, 450£, with a deduction of 9£ for a provision secured to my sister, she being survivor, the pension guaranteed by Act Georgii Tertii, etc.

I came home FOR EVER on Tuesday in last week. The incomprehensibleness of my condition overwhelmed me. It was like passing from life into eternity. Every year to be as long as three, *i.e.*, to have three times as much real time (time that is my own) in it? I wandered about thinking I was happy, but feeling I was not. But that tumultuousness is a-passing off, and I begin to understand the nature of the gift. Holy-days, even the annual month, were always uneasy joys; their conscious fugitiveness; the craving after making the most

of them. Now, when all is holyday, there are no holydays. I can sit at home, in rain or shine, without a restless impulse for walkings. I am daily steadying, and shall soon find it as natural to me to be my own master, as it has been irksome to have had a master. Mary wakes every morning with an obscure feeling that some good has happened to us.

Leigh Hunt and Montgomery after their releasements, describe the shock of their emancipation much as I feel mine. But it hurt their frames. I eat, drink, and sleep as sound as ever. I lay no anxious schemes for going hither and thither, but take things as they occur. Yesterday I excursioned twenty miles; to-day I write a few letters. Pleasuring was for fugitive playdays; mine are fugitive only in the sense that life is fugitive. Freedom and life are co-existent? . . .

C. LAMB.

Mr. Micawber to David Copperfield

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND, — The die is cast — all is over. Hiding the ravages of care with a sickly mask of mirth, I have not informed you, this evening, that there is no hope of a remittance! Under these circumstances, alike humiliating to endure, humiliating to contemplate, and humiliating to relate, I have discharged the pecuniary liability contracted at this establishment, by giving a note of hand, made payable fourteen days after date, at my residence, Pentonville, London. When it becomes due, it will not be taken up. The result is destruction. The bolt is impending, and the tree must fall.

Let the wretched man who now addresses you, my dear Copperfield, be a beacon to you through life. He writes with that intention, and in that hope. If he could think himself of so much use, one gleam of day might, by possibility, penetrate into the cheerless dungeon of his remaining existence — though

his longevity is, at present (to say the least of it), extremely problematical.

This is the last communication, my dear Copperfield, you will ever receive from the beggared outcast,

WILKINS MICAWBER.

TOPICS FOR ADVANCED STUDY

1. Consult the article on "Laureate" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* for the names of writers who have held the office of poet laureate. Find from the *Century Dictionary of Names* the chief facts recorded there concerning each of the laureates.

2. Examine the latest edition of the *Literary Year Book* for the names of those who have won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Prepare brief sketches of the prize-winners, with especial attention to what each has written.

3. In the *Dictionary of National Biography* find the biographies of four novelists of the nineteenth century. Summarize each of them; then tell which you think the most interesting, with your reasons for so thinking.

4. Investigate the biographies of several, at least ten, nineteenth-century English men of letters. Then discuss this question, — Are men of letters notable for much excepting the production of literature?

5. Look up the friendships among literary men,— for example, of Tennyson and Hallam, of Wordsworth and Coleridge, of those in the "Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood."

6. Make a list of the poets and another of the prose-writers of each of the periods in the history of English literature. Then estimate which you think is the most important list for each period.

7. Compare and contrast Whittier and Burns, Cooper and Scott, Emerson and Carlyle, Hawthorne and Stevenson.

8. Read the accounts of the visits of English literary men to America, — of Dickens, Thackeray, Matthew Arnold, Kipling, and others. What were the effects?

9. Find all the traces you can of the history of England upon the life of America.

10. Trace the influence of individual men of letters in England upon literature in America.

11. Take four of the best English short-story writers and an equal number

of the best American short-story writers, and compare them in their methods and their subject matter.

12. *The Man Without a Country* and *Rip Van Winkle* are said to be the two most widely known short-stories both within and without the country of America. Why are they the most widely known?

13. Review the stories of your favorite short-story writer; then write an article estimating him from three points of view, — (1) Veracity, or truth to life, (2) Catholicity of temper, or breadth of view concerning human life. (3) Faculty for story-telling, or interesting by mere continuity and relationship of incidents.

14. What writers in America have done most in freeing the literature of the United States from imitation of the literature of Europe, in each of the following periods: Before 1789; from 1789 to 1815; from 1815 to 1861; from 1861 to 1890; from 1890 to 1916?

15. A literature that is truly national "is based on heroic achievement, or a struggle in defense of an ideal, or to widen an idealistic conception." Has America a truly national literature?

16. Trace the influence of poets upon succeeding poets, so far as you can do so, in the history of English literature.

17. Find all the passages you can in which poets have written of other poets. What is the prevailing general spirit of these passages?

18. Classify the poems of Browning according to their themes, such as religion, love, music, painting. Which group appeals most to you?

19. Search through old English Ballads for "human interest" elements such as are characteristic of the work of modern newspaper reporters.

20. Find and name, with the names of their authors, all the patriotic lyrics you think worthy of being memorized by a high school freshman.

21. Make a survey of English poetry from any one of the following points of view: the use of the theme of patriotism; the use of the elegiac form of verse; the use of different forms of sonnet; the description of gardens; the description of sports. Stedman's *Anthology of American Poetry* will help, also his *Anthology of Victorian Poetry*, Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*, and the *Oxford Book of English Verse*.

22. What claims has D.G. Rossetti's *The King's Tragedy* to being considered the best modern ballad in English?

23. Which of the following has been the greatest cause for production of English literature — love of wonder, love of story, love of humor? Give concrete reasons for your opinion.

24. What is "Romanticism"? Consult the library catalogue under that head. See what distinction you can work out between "Romanticism" and "Classicism." Illustrate freely by reference to literary productions.

25. What reasons can you give for the value of the word "heroicism" as descriptive of some literary productions? Be sure that you base your reasons upon concrete facts.

26. Of one passage in the eighth chapter of the third book of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* it has been said that "it is perhaps the most memorable utterance of the greatest poet of the age." Find the passage, state in what sense it is poetic, and give reasons for its being a "memorable utterance."

27. Why during some periods of English history has there been an abundant production of literature, while during other periods the production has been meager? Assign the causes to the various periods. Has the history of American literature been so influenced?

28. Consider literature from a tri-dimensional point of view, that is to say, consider length (of popularity), breadth (how wide an audience), and depth (how much thought or emotion has been stirred), as tests of the success of a written product.

29. What were the chief features of the Renaissance movement, aside from those features which most directly affected literature?

30. Imagine you have had a midsummer night's dream in which all your favorite characters in Shakespeare's plays were together in a room into which you stepped. Describe the appearance of each of them and the effects of each upon you.

31. Compare the essays of Bacon with those of Dr. Johnson and of Charles Lamb, as revealing the personalities of the writers.

32. Discuss the influence of Puritanism upon English literature, particularly upon Milton and Bunyan, looking chiefly for the differences between these two men.

33. Study the Puritan and his descendant, the New England farmer, in the short-stories written by Hawthorne, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mrs. Wilkins-Freeman, Alice Brown, and Sarah Orne Jewett.

34. Study the negro in the American short-story. Do not overlook the following writers: F. Hopkinson Smith, Joel Chandler Harris, Thomas Nelson Page, James Lane Allen, George W. Cable, O. Henry, E. A. Poe, Harry Stillwell Edwards, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Maurice Thompson, Sarah Barnwell Elliott, Richard Malcolm Johnston, Charles Egbert Craddock, John Fox, Jr., Mrs. Ruth McEnery Stuart.

35. Study the Indian in the prose fiction of America.

36. Make a selection of the most interesting entries within any consecutive one hundred pages of the *Diary* of Samuel Pepys. Also of the dozen most interesting passages in the *Diary* of John Adams.

37. From a translation into modern English of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* extract all the passages referring to the characters whom Shakespeare used in the tragedy of *Macbeth.*

38. Find through the library catalogue the books containing collections of letters of well-known English literary men and women. Discuss the value of the letters in at least two of these collections.

39. Contrast the spirit of Sir Thomas Maloty's treatment of old Welsh legends in his *Morte d'Arthur* with that of Thomas Love Peacock in his *Misfortunes of Elphin.* It will be well to keep in mind the spirit of treatment in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, and in Goldsmith's lines beginning "When good King Arthur ruled his land." Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court* should also be read. But fix the attention chiefly upon Malory and Peacock.

40. Write in short-story form *The Testing of Sir Gawayne* as it is told in Marguerite Merington's "Festival Play" under that title.

41. Add to the list of Fairy Stories given on page 392, until you have made the list contain at least twelve in number. Which is the best of the twelve, and why?

42. In Sir Walter Scott's *The Antiquary* find the "prose idylls" drawn from the lives of Scotch fishers, and report upon their descriptive elements, their songs, and the lore which they contain.

43. In Henry Morley's *Character Writings of the Seventeenth Century* read a few of the "Characters" by Sir Thomas Overbury and by Samuel Butler, and *several* by John Earle. Then write a "Character" after the manner of those authors.

44. Carefully compare the leading persons in George Bernard Shaw's *Cæsar and Cleopatra* with the chief persons in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* and his *Antony and Cleopatra.*

45. After careful reading of John Galsworthy's drama entitled *Strife*, write an essay in which you state and explain what the author tries most to make clear and what appears to be his attitude of mind toward what he is depicting.

46. Compare the pictures of English aristocracy in Meredith's *Diana of the Crossways*, Hardy's *Two on a Tower*, and Galsworthy's *The Patrician.*

47. Read Jeffery Farnol's *The Honorable Mr. Tawnish.* What characteristics of the life of eighteenth-century England are presented in that book?

48. Write a brief history of the short-story from 1870 to 1895.

49. Find the differences in the literature of different regions of England, — for example, that of London, that of the Lake Country, that of the Border Counties to the west, also of those to the north.

50. "The highest praise of a book is that it sets us thinking, but surely the next highest praise is that it ransoms us from thought," said James Russell Lowell. In accordance with that distinction, classify the books which you have read within the past year and a half, with explanation sufficient to make your classification give the impression of being accurate.

INDEX

Abbot, The, 227, 228
Abou Ben Adhem, 233
Abt Vogler, 326, 327
Adam Bede, 263, 265, 266
Addison, Joseph, 5, 13, 134, 145, 160, 161, 163–164, 167, 240
Adonais, 214, 308, 382
Advantages of Living in a Garret, 166
Adventures of Peregrine Pickle, 178
Adventures of Roderick Random, 178
Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 18, 274
Ælfred, 10, 29
Ælfric, 10, 29, 30, 53
Æneid, 355
Æschylus, 96
A Face, 326
Affliction of Margaret, 201
Afton Water, 157
Agamemnon (Translation), 320, 328
A Health, 248
Aids to Reflection, 238
Ainger, Canon, 311
Alastor, 213
Alchemist, The, 111
Alcuin, 10, 29
Alden, R. M., 382
Aldrich, Thomas Bailey, 18, 275, 277
Alexander's Feast, 128, 135
Alice Fell, 198
Alice-for-Short, 20
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, 17, 267
Alice Through the Looking-Glass, 267
All for Love, 13, 127
Allen, James Lane, 21, 339, 342
All's Well that Ends Well, 81, 82, 89
Alton Locke, 268
Amelia, 178
American, The, 275
American Historians, 256
American Literature, 2, 15, 18, 16, 21, 183, 247, 256, 273, 277, 293, 299, 339, 341, 345, 349
American Scholar, The, 248
American Short-story, 277
American Taxation, 167
Ambrosio, or The Monk, 14
Among the Corn-Rows, 21
Amoretti, 62
Amos Barton, 276
"Anacreontic" poems, 62
Ancient Mariner, The Rime of, 15, 189, 192, 193
Ancren Riwle, 34
Andrea del Sarto, 326
Andreas, 28
Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion, 14, 181
An Apology for Idlers, 293
Anatomy of Melancholy, 114
Angel in the House, 304
Angles, 25
Anglo-Indian Literature, 2, 19, 347, 348–349
Anglo-Saxon and Middle-English Literature, 23–47, 354
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 10, 29, 31, 33, 46
Anglo-Saxon Literature, 3, 4, 10, 23–30
Anglo-Saxons, 23, 39
Anne of Geierstein, 229, 230, 231
Antiquary, The, 16
Antony and Cleopatra, 81, 83, 101, 104, 127
Apologia pro Vita Sua, 288
Apology for Actors, 75
Appreciations, 290
Arbuthnot, Dr., 173
Arcadia, 12, 54, 59, 170
Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich, 341
Archer, William, 329
Arden of Feversham, 75, 82
Areopagitica, 115, 118
Ariosto, 11, 56
Aristotle, 73, 93
Arnold, Sir Edwin, 19, 348

Arnold, Matthew, 17, 117, 147, 201, 239, 284–286, 290, 296, 297, 300, 305–309, 331, 346, 382, 394, 396
Arraignment of Paris, The, 12, 76
Ars Poetica, 142
Arthur of the Round Table, 29, 31, 45
Art of Painting, 129
Art of Poetry, 124
Ascham, Roger, 11, 68
Asolando : Fancies and Facts, 320, 328
A Sonnet, 214
Astrophel, 62
Astrophel and Stella Sonnets, 54
As You Like It, 80, 81, 82, 88
Atalanta in Calydon, 18, 302, 308, 330
Auerbach, Berthold, 277
Augustan Literature, 164
Aurora Leigh, 304
Austen, Jane, 15, 181, 188, 225–227, 267
Austin, Alfred, 20, 346, 347
Australian Literature, 2, 19, 349
Autobiography (De Quincey), 242
Autobiography (Franklin), 15, 183
Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table, 19, 234
Autumn, To, 224
Ayenbite of Inwyt, 34

Bachelor's Complaint of the Behavior of Married People, 238
Bacon, Essay on, 280
Bacon, Francis, 5, 7, 11, 58, 73, 118, 131, 134, 163, 165, 166, 238, 366
Bæda, 10, 29
Balder Dead, 308
Bale, John, 11, 73, 74
Ballad of Agincourt, 56
Ballad of the Dark Ladie, 194
Ballad of Trees and the Master, 299
Ballads, 6, 7, 32, 356, 380
Ballads and Other Poems, 318
Ballads, Old English, 46
Balzac, Honoré, 228
Bancroft, George, 18, 253, 256
Banks o' Doon, The, 157
Bannockburn, 157
Barbara Frietchie, 345
Barbour, John, 10, 44
Barchester Towers, 18, 267
Barker, Granville, 20, 343
Barnaby Rudge, 260
Barrack-Room Ballads, 348
Barrie, James M., 20, 343
Bartholomew Fair, 111
Battle of Maldon, 380
Battle of the Baltic, 233
Battle of the Books, The, 165
Baxter, Richard, 12, 114
Beattie, James, 13, 151
Beau Brummel, 345
Beauchamp's Career, 271
Beaumont, Francis, 11, 110
Beaux' Stratagem, The, 160
Becket, 318, 330, 331
Beckford, William, 14, 181
Beddoes, Thomas Lovell, 17, 296, 297
Bee, The, 165
Beggar's Opera, The, 14, 160
Beloved Vagabond, The, 20
Ben Hur, 19
Bennett, Arnold, 20, 52, 76, 338, 343
Beowulf, 1, 10, 24, 25–28, 46
Berenice, 247, 277
Berkeley, Bishop, 14, 181
Betrothed, The, 229, 230
Bible, 11, 57, 69, 114, 118, 119, 120, 128, 202, 290, 348
Bible in Spain, The, 17, 258
Bibliographies, 107, 108, 137, 186, 251, 335, 352, 358, 365, 366, 378, 385, 386, 393, 397, 398
Biglow Papers, The, 19
Birrell, Augustine, 196
Black Dwarf, The, 227, 228
Blackmore, Richard Doddridge, 17, 258, 266
Blackwood's Magazine, 232
Blair, Robert, 14, 147
Blake, William, 14, 157–158
Blank Verse, 73
Blessed Damozel, The, 18, 301–302
Blot in the 'Scutcheon, A, 320, 324, 330, 331
Boccaccio, 40, 41, 44, 57, 129
Bockhurst, Lord, 12, 57
Boileau, N., 124, 125, 142
Book of Martyrs, 57
Book of Merlin, The, 216
Books, Number published yearly, 336
Borrow, George, 17, 258
Bostonians, The, 275
Boswell, Essay on, 281
Boswell, James, 14, 183, 244
Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich, 17, 298
Bottle Imp, The, 277

Boy's Town, A, 275
"Break, Break, Break," 308, 310
Bridal of Triermain, The, 204
Bride of Abydos, The, 208, 227
Bride of Lammermoor, The, 228
Bridge-Builders, The, 341
Bridge of Sighs, The, 233
Bridges, Robert, 20, 346
Britannia's Pastorals, 12
Broken Heart, The, 13, 111
Brontë, Anne, 258
Brontë, Charlotte, 15, 181, 225, 257, 258, 266
Brontë, Emily, 258
Brooke, Lord, 11, 56
Brooke, Rupert, 347
Brooke, Stopford, 201
Brougham Castle, 202
Brown, Charles Brockden, 16, 247
Brown, Dr. John, 17, 275, 276
Browne, Sir Thomas, 12, 114, 118, 164, 240
Browne, William, 12, 384
Browning, Mrs. E. B., 17, 199, 300, 304–305, 383
Browning, Robert, 17, 187, 271, 296, 300, 305, 306, 309, 318, 319–331
Brown Passenger, Our, 18
Bruce, The, 10, 44
Bruskwood Boy, The, 341
Brut, 10, 31
Bryant, William Cullen, 16, 247
Buddha, 348
Budgell, Eustace, 14, 163
Builder of Bridges, The, 20
Bunner, Henry Cuyler, 18, 275, 277
Bunyan, John, 5, 12, 34, 132–133, 170, 171, 317
Burden of Nineveh, The, 301
Bürger, Gottfried August, 203
Burroughs, John, 21
Bush Ballads, 19
Butler, Bishop, 14, 181
Butler, Samuel, 12, 135
Burke, Edmund, 6, 14, 163, 166–168, 181, 182, 183, 196
Burney, Frances, 14, 180, 181
Burns, Essay on, 156
Burns, Life of, 156
Burns, Robert, 14, 141, 156–157, 191, 232, 234, 240, 381
Burton, Robert, 12, 114, 240
Byron, George Gordon, 5, 15, 150, 188, 189, 192, 194, 196, 203, 205, 206–210, 211, 232, 245, 330, 381

Cable, George Washington, 18, 275, 277, 339
Cædmon, 10, 28
Cæsar, Julius, 23, 81, 83, 97
Cain, 189, 208, 210, 330
Cambridge Thirty Years Ago, 294
Campaign, 146
Campbell, Thomas, 15, 159, 207, 233, 318
Canadian Literature, 21, 349
Candida, 20
Canterbury Pilgrims, 158
Canterbury Tales, The, 10, 39, 41, 42, 45, 46, 60
Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines, 345
Captains Courageous, 120, 338
Cardenna, 82
Carlyle, Thomas, 17, 156, 163, 253–254, 271, 281–284, 290, 308, 353
Carman, Bliss, 21, 349
Caroline Lyrists, 110, 113
"Carroll, Lewis," 17, 258, 267
Casa Guidi Windows, 304
Caste, 18, 331
Castle Dangerous, 229, 230, 231
Castle of Indolence, The, 149
Castle of Otranto, The, 15, 180
Castle Rackrent, 16, 181, 254
Cathleen ni Houlihan, 343
Catiline, 111
Cato, 160, 161
"Cavalier Tunes," 324
Caxton, William, 10
Celtic Renaissance, 343
Cenci, The, 214, 215, 330
Century Dictionary, The, 382
Cervantes, Miguel de, 96, 164, 176, 177, 179
Chambers, Robert, 15, 232
Chambers, William, 232
Changeling, The, 13
Chapman, George, 11, 56
Character, Essay on, 294
Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times, 15
Character Writing, 112
Characters of Shakespeare's Plays, 239
Characters of Virtues and Vices, 13
Charge of the Light Brigade, The, 56

Charlemagne, 29
Châteaubriand, François René, 150
Chatham, Essay on, 281
Chatterton, Thomas, 14, 149, 223, 224
Chaucer, Geoffrey, 4, 10, 33, 36–44, 46, 48, 60, 66, 73, 92, 103, 110, 129, 134, 173, 187, 310, 319
Cheke, Sir John, 11, 68
Chesterton, G. K., 267, 323
Chesterfield, Lord, 400
Chevy Chase, 32
Childe Harold, 207, 208, 209
Child's Garden of Verses, A, 293
Child's Grave at Florence, A, 304
Chinese Letters, 165
Christabel, 193, 194, 195, 204
Christian Prince, The, 51
Christmas-Eve and Easter Day, 320, 325–326
"Christopher North," 16, 232
Chronicle Plays, 82, 90
Chronicles of Canongate, 230
Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland, 11, 57
Church of Brou, The, 307
Churchill, Winston, 21, 339
Cicero, 59
Citizen of the World, The, 165
City, The, 345
Civil Government, 131
Claribel, 311
Clarissa Harlowe, 175, 176
Clarke, Marcus A. H., 19, 349
Classicism, 141
Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, 18, 274–275
Climbers, The, 345
Clive, Essay on, 281
Cloister and the Hearth, 18
Closet-drama, 161
Cloud, The, 214, 216
Clough, Arthur Hugh, 17, 296, 297, 298, 308
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 4, 15, 127, 140, 158, 188, 189, 192–197, 199, 203, 204, 205, 212, 220, 224, 226, 232, 237, 238–239, 241, 245, 319, 330, 395
Colet, John, 11, 50, 51
Colin Clout's Come Home Again, 61, 62
Collected Poems (of Rupert Brooke), 347
Collins, Wilkie, 17, 258, 267, 275, 276
Collins, William, 14, 148–149
Comedy, 360
Comedy of Errors, The, 81, 82, 86
Comin' through the Rye, 157
Compensation, Essay on, 294
Comus, 74, 76, 115, 117
Concerning the Human Understanding, 182
Conciliation with the American Colonies, 167
Confessio Amantis, 10, 36
Confessions of an English Opium-Eater, 242
Congreve, William, 14, 160
Coningsby, 17, 257
Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court, A, 45
Conquest of Mexico, The, 19
Conrad, Joseph, 20, 338–339, 341
Conscious Lovers, The, 15
Conspiracy of Pontiac, 256
Constant Couple, The, 160
Constitutional History of England, The, 235
Cooper, Anthony Ashley. (*See* Shaftesbury), 15
Cooper, James Fenimore, 17, 204, 247, 339
Corinna, 113
Coriolanus, 81, 83, 102, 234
Corn, 299
Corsair, 208
Cotter's Saturday Night, The, 14, 157
Cowboy and the Lady, The, 345
Cowley, Abraham, 12, 134, 135
Cowper, William, 14, 151, 151–153, 195
Coverdale, Miles, 11, 52
Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV, 256
Count Julian, 16, 204, 234
Count Robert of Paris, 229, 230, 231
Cousin Phyllis, 266
Cranford, 17, 266
Crashaw, Richard, 13, 113
Crawford, Francis Marion, 21, 339
Crisis, The, 21
Crist, 10
Critical and Historical Essays (Macaulay's), 278
Criticism, 6, 336, 394–398
Criticism, Definition of, 5
Cromwell, Oliver, 109, 124, 126, 131
Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, 254
Crossing the Bar, 310, 319
Crotchet Castle, 247

Crown of Wild Olive, 292
Crusades, 30, 49, 91
Cymbeline, 80, 81, 83, 104
Cynewulf, 10, 28, 30, 32
Cynthia's Revels, 111

Daffodils, The, 201
Daffodil Fields, 347
Daily Bread, 347
Daniel Deronda, 263, 264, 266
Danes, 39
Dante, 36, 41, 66, 96, 164, 217, 233
Dargan, Mrs. Olive Tilford, 21, 345–346
Darwin, Charles R., 17, 252, 295–296, 311
Dauber, The, 20, 347
David Balfour, 271
David Copperfield, 17, 258, 260, 402
Davideis, 12
de Bourgogne, Jean, 33
"Decadent," 111
Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis, The, 238
Declaration of Independence, 15, 183
Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, The, 14, 182, 235
de Coverley Papers, 13, 163, 170
Defence of Lucknow, The, 318
Defence of Poesy, 55, 73
Defence of Poetry, A, 218
Defoe, Daniel, 14, 138, 140, 145, 162, 164, 170, 171–172, 177, 183
Deirdre of the Sorrows, 343
de la Fayette, Madame, 132
Deland, Margaretta Wade Campbell, 21, 339
De Morgan, William, 20, 339
Demosthenes, 168
Denis Duval, 261
Dennis Haggerty's Wife, 276
Departmental Ditties, 348
De Quincey, Thomas, 15, 167, 198, 232, 235, 241–242, 279, 287
De Quincey, Life of, 242
Descent of Man, The, 296
Description of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empire of Guiana, The, 55
Deserted Village, The, 151
de Vere, Aubrey, 315
Diary of John Evelyn, 13
Diary, Pepys's, 13, 133–134
Diana of the Crossways, 271
Dickens, Charles, 17, 188, 258–261, 266, 271, 275, 276, 338, 372
Diderot, Denis, 176
Dirge for Wolfram, The, 297
Discourses in America, 285
Discourses on Painting, 15
Disraeli, Benjamin, 17, 257
Dissertation on Roast Pig, 238
Divine Emblems, 13
Divine Fire, The, 20
Doctor Faustus, 12, 77
Dodgson, Charles Lutwidge, 17, 258
Dombey and Son, 260
Don Juan, 209
Donne, Dr. John, 13, 56, 113, 125
Don Quixote, 177
Dorset, Sixth Earl of, 13, 135
Dowden, Edward, 197
Dowel, Dobet, and Dobest, 35
Drake, 347
Drama, 6, 7, 66, 329–331, 342–346, 353, 354, 359–360
Drama in America, 344–346
Dramatic Idylls, 320, 328
Dramatic Lyrics, 320, 324
Dramatic Romances, 320, 325
Dramatis Personæ, 320, 326, 327
Drayton, Michael, 44
Dreams, 21, 341
Dream Children; a Revery, 238
Dream of Fair Women, A, 311
Dream of Gerontius, The, 18, 288
Dream-Pedlary, 17, 297
Droeshout, Martin, 79
Drummond, Henry, 182
Drummond, William of Hawthornden, 11, 56
Dryden, John, 5, 110, 118, 123–130, 134, 135, 156, 160, 163, 164, 207, 394
Duchess of Malfi, The, 13, 111
Du Fresnoy, Charles Alphonse, 129
Dumas, Alexandre, 226
Dunbar, Paul Laurence, 350
Dunciad, The, 144, 207
Dying Swan, The, 311

Earle, John, 13, 112, 170
Early Nineteenth Century Literature, 3, 5, 15, 187–251, 354
Earthly Paradise, The, 18, 299
Earth's Enigmas, 21
Earthworms, 296
Easter-Day, 325

Ecclesiastes, 92
Ecclesiastical History, 10, 29
Echoes from the Sabine Farm, 21
Edgar Huntley, 16
Edgeworth, Maria, 16, 180, 181, 244, 275
Edinburgh Review, 16, 206, 210, 232, 242, 254
Edison, Thomas, 252
Edward II, 75, 77
Edward III, 37, 82
Edwards, Jonathan, 15, 183
Edwin Drood, 260
Effect of Natural Objects, 202
Egoist, The, 18, 271, 272
Eighteenth Century Literature, 3, 5, 14, 138–186, 354
Elegiac Verse, 382
Elegy, 381
Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, 14, 148, 381
Elements of Logic, 16, 241
Elements of Rhetoric, 241
Elene, 28
Eliot, George, 17, 181, 225, 258, 263, 266, 275, 276, 330
Elizabethans, 4
Ellwood, Thomas, 120
Elsie Venner, 274
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 19, 248, 294, 297, 299, 382
Emma, 226
Empedocles on Etna, 307, 308
Endymion, 219, 221, 222, 223
English Comic Writers, 16
English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century, The, 263
English Idylls and Other Poems, 312
English Language, 68
English Mail-Coach, The, 242
English Verse, 382
Englishman, 163
Enoch Arden, 313, 317–318, 347
Epic, 6, 7, 28, 353, 354–358
Epigram, 383–384
Epilogue, 329
Epipsychidion, 214, 216, 217
Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, 144
Epitaph, 383
Epithalamion, 62
Erasmus, 50, 51, 268
Essay, 6, 7, 162–168, 235–245, 293–294, 353, 366–369
Essay on Dramatic Poesy, 129
Essay on Man, 144
Essay on the Human Understanding, 13, 131
Essays (Temple's), 13, 134
Essays in Criticism, 17, 285, 346
Essays of Elia, 16, 236
Essays on Criticism, 143
Ethan Brand, 277
Ethics of the Dust, The, 292
Euphues and his England, 12, 59, 170
Euphues, The Anatomy of Wit, 59
Euphuism, 59
Euripides, 176
Europeans, The, 275
Europe During the Middle Ages, 16
Evan Harrington, 271
Evans, Marian (*See* George Eliot), 17, 263
Evelina, 14, 181
Evelyn, John, 13, 133
Evelyn Hope, 323
Eve of St. Agnes, The, 223
Evergreen, The, 145
Everlasting Mercy, The, 347
Everyman, 70
Every Man Out of His Humour, 111
Excursion, The, 155, 201, 218
Exodus, Paraphrase of, 10
Expedition of Humphrey Clinker, 178, 179
Ezekiel, 96, 212

Fables (Dryden's), 129
Fable of the Bees, 14, 146
Faerie Queen, The, 61, 63–66, 214
Fairy Stories, 392
Faithful Shepherdess, The, 111
Faith-Healer, The, 21
Fairfax, Edward, 11, 56
Fair Maid of Perth, The, 229, 230, 231
Fair Maid of the West, The, 75
Falles of Princes, 10, 44
Fall of the House of Usher, The, 277
Familiar Studies in Men and Books, 293
Farquhar, George, 4, 160
Fate of the Butterfly, 61
Fatima, 311
Faust, 208
Federalist Papers, 15, 183
Felix Holt, 263, 265
Field, Eugene, 21, 350
Fielding, Henry, 5, 14, 170, 174, 175, 176–178, 179, 227, 231, 262, 338

Fifteenth Century Literature, 44
Fingal, 150
First Quarrel, The, 318
Fitch, Clyde, 344
Fitzgerald, Edward, 17, 296, 297, 311, 312
"Five Towns," 338
Flaming Heart, The, 13
Fletcher, John, 11, 110
Florio, John, 11, 56, 165
Folk-Song, 380
For A' That and A' That, 157
Ford, John, 13, 110
Foregone Conclusion, A, 274
Foresters, The, 319, 330
Forest Lovers, The, 339
Forest Sanctuary, The, 16
Forsaken Merman, The, 306
For the Term of his Natural Life, 19
Forth Feasting, 11
Fortunes of Nigel, 228, 229
Fouqué, Friederich, 227
Four PP, The, 11
Fox, Charles James, 61
Fox and the Wolf, The, 32
Foxe, John, 57
Fra Lippo Lippi, 326
France : An Ode, 197
Franklin, Benjamin, 15, 58, 168, 183
Frederick the Great, Essay on, 281
Freedom of the Will, 15, 183
Freeman, Edward Augustus, 17, 182, 253, 255
Freeman, Mrs. Mary E. Wilkins, 21, 275, 342
French Influence in English literature during the Seventeenth Century, 124–125
French Revolution, The, 17, 52, 139, 146, 167, 195–197, 204, 205, 253
Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, 11
Frohman, Charles, 344
Froude, James Anthony, 17, 253, 255–256
Fudge Family in Paris, The, 206
Fuller, Thomas, 13, 114, 240
Fun in a Green-Room, 344

Galahad, Sir, 312
Galsworthy, John, 20, 343
Game-Keeper at Home, The, 286
Gardener's Daughter, The, 312
Gardiner, Samuel R., 211
Garland, Hamlin, 21, 342
Gaskell, Mrs. Elizabeth, 17, 181, 258, 266
Gawain and the Green Knight, Sir, 10, 32, 46
Gay, John, 14, 160
Gebir, 234
Genius of Hogarth, 237
Gentle Shepherd, The, 15, 145
Geoffrey of Monmouth, 10, 31, 33
Gertrude of Wyoming, 233
Geste de Bretons, 11
Giaour, 208
Gibbon, Edward, 14, 60, 182, 183, 235, 254
Gibson, Wilfrid, 347
Gilbert, William S., 17, 331
Gilder, Richard Watson, 21, 353
Girl with the Green Eyes, The, 345
Gissing, George, 20, 338
Gladstone, William Ewart, 311
Glove, The, 325
Go, Lovely Rose, 13
Goblin Market, The, 18, 298
Godwin, William, 213
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 39, 150, 164, 174, 203, 208, 210, 213, 229, 365, 306, 315
Goetz von Berlichingen, 203
Golden Age, The, 254
Golden Legend, Translation of, 10
Golden Rule, 51
Golden Violet, The, 233
Goldsmith, Oliver, 14, 148, 151, 160, 165, 166, 174, 246, 247
Good-natured Man, The, 161
Good-Sense, Age of, 123
Good Word for Winter, A, 294
Gorboduc, 12, 57, 72
Gordon, Adam Lindsay, 19, 349
Gospel of St. John, Translation, 29
Gosse, Edmund, 132
Gould, Gerald, 347
Gower, John, 10, 36, 38
Grahame, Kenneth, 254
Grandissimes, The, 18
Grave, The, 14, 147
Gray, Thomas, 14, 140, 147–148, 159, 381
Great Expectations, 260
Great Stone Face, The, 277
Green, John Richard, 6, 17, 54, 253, 255
Greene, Richard, 11, 75, 76
Gregory, Lady Augusta, 20, 343
Greville, Fulke, 11, 56

Griffith Gaunt, 268
Grote, George, 18, 253, 254–255
Growth of Love, The, 20
Grumbling Hive, or The Knaves Turned Honest, 146
Guardian, 163
Guardian Angel, The, 224
Guinevere, 317
Gulliver's Travels, 15, 170
Guy Mannering, 227, 228

Hakluyt, Richard, 68
Hale, Edward Everett, 19, 275, 277, 388
Hale, Edward Everett, Jr., 142
Half-Century of Conflict, A, 256
Hall, Edward, 11, 72
Hall, Joseph, 13, 112
Hallam, A. H., 314
Hallam, Essay on, 281
Hallam, Henry, 16, 234, 235
Hamilton, Alexander, 15, 185
Hamlet, 12, 81, 83, 97, 98, 99, 129, 134, 237, 360
Harbours of England, 292
Hard Cash, 268
Hard Times, 260
Hardy, Alexandre, 102
Hardy, Thomas, 18, 258, 273, 347
Harold, 318, 330
Harrington, Sir John, 11, 56
Harris, Joel Chandler, 21, 342
Harrison, Frederic, 261
Harry Richmond, 271
Harte, Francis Bret, 19, 275, 277, 387
Hastings, Essay on, 281
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 19, 38, 154, 248, 274, 275, 277, 339
Haydon, Benjamin R., 218, 219
Hazard of New Fortunes, A, 275
Hazlitt, William, 16, 218, 239
Headlong Hall, 247
Heart of Midlothian, The, 227, 228
Heat as a Mode of Motion, 18, 295
Heine's Grave, 308
Hemans, Mrs. Felicia, 16, 233
Henrietta, The, 344
Henry, O., 21, 342
Henry Esmond, 178, 231, 261
Herbert, George, 13, 113
Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History, On, 281, 282
Heroism, Essay on, 294
Her Own Way, 345
Herrick, Robert, 5, 13, 113
Herrick, Robert (American), 339
Hesperides, The, 13
Hewlett, Maurice, 20, 339, 341
Heywood, John, 11, 71, 75
Highland Mary, 157
Highland Widow, The, 229, 230
Hind and the Panther, 128
Historians, 181
Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Bonaparte, 241
History, 9, 234–235
History, Essay on, 294
History of the Conquest of Mexico, 256
History of the Conquest of Peru, 256
History of England, 18
History of England from the Accession of James II, 254
History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Destruction of the Spanish Armada, 17, 255
History of the English People, 17, 255
History of the Formation of the Constitution of the United States, 256
History of Frederick the Great, 254
History of the French Revolution, 253
History of Great Britain, 182
History of Greece, 18, 255
History of the Jews, 235
History of the Kings of Britain, 10, 31, 33
History of Latin Christianity, 16, 235
History of the Norman Conquest, 255
History of the Reign of Charles V, 15, 182
History of the Reign of Philip II, 256
History of the United Netherlands, 256
History of the United States, 18, 256
History of the World, 12
Hobbes, Thomas, 13, 56, 131
Hogarth, William, 237
Hohenlinden, 233
Holinshed, Raphael, 11, 57, 72
Hollow Between Three Hills, The, 277
Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 19, 248, 274, 294, 297, 299, 311
Holy Grail, The, 317
Holy Living and Dying, 13, 114
Homer (Chapman's Translation), 11, 96, 103
Homer, 176, 355
Hood, Thomas, 16, 233
Hooker, Richard, 11, 57, 114, 118, 290

Horace, 124, 142
Horne, Charles F., 370
Hosea, 212
Houghton, Lord, 311
Hound of Heaven, The, 20
Hours of Idleness, 206, 209
House and the Brain, or The Haunted and the Haunters, 245
House of Life, The, 301
House of Mirth, The, 21
House of the Seven Gables, The, 274
Hovey, Richard, 21
Howard, Bronson, 344
Howard, Henry, 12, 53
Howells, William Dean, 19, 274, 275
How the Daughters Come Down to Dunoon, 232
How the Water Comes Down at Lodore, 232
Huckleberry Finn, 274
Hudibras, 12, 135
Hughes, John, 14, 163
Hughes, Thomas, 18, 258, 266
Hugo, Victor, 95, 96, 164, 210, 226
Human Seasons, The, 89
Hume, David, 6, 14, 181, 182, 191, 212
Hunt, James Henry Leigh, 16, 219, 220, 221, 233, 240, 272
Huxley, Thomas Henry, 6, 18, 252, 295, 296
Hygelac, 1
Hymn, 381
Hymn to Intellectual Beauty, 214
Hypatia, 18, 269
Hyperion, 222, 223

Ibsen, Henrik, 90, 97, 343, 360
Icelandic Industries, 291
Idea of a University, 288
Idler, The, 166
Idylls of the King, 313, 317, 355
Iliad, 103, 144, 355
Il Penseroso, 115, 116
Imaginary Conversations, 240
Imitative Ballad, 381
In a Gondola, 325
Indian Emperor, The, 127
Industries, 201
In Memoriam, 32, 308, 310, 313, 314–315, 382
In Memory of Walter Savage Landor, 382
In Praise of Chimney-Sweepers, 238
Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding, 14
Inquiry into the Nature of the Sublime and the Beautiful, 167
Interludes, 70
Intimations of Immortality, Ode on, 190, 192, 381
Iris, 20
Irish Bulls, Essay on, 244
Irish Melodies, 234
Irish Play-wrights, 343–344
Iron Woman, The, 21
Irving, Washington, 17, 55, 247
"Isaac Bickerstaff," 165
Isabella; or, the Pot of Basil, 222
Isaiah, 212
Isles of Greece, The, 381
Italy, 16, 233
It's Never Too Late to Mend, 268
Ivanhoe, 227, 228, 229
Ivan Ivanovitch, 328

James I, of Scotland, 10, 45
James, Henry, 19, 181, 274, 275, 277
James Lee's Wife, 327
Jane Eyre, 15, 257
Jarrow, 29
Jefferies, Richard, 18, 286
Jefferson, Thomas, 183
Jeffrey, Francis, 16, 232, 242
Jerusalem, Translation, 11
Jesuits in North America, The, 256
Jew of Malta, The, 77
Joan of Arc, 15
Job, 96
John Gilpin's Ride, 151
John Inglesant, 18, 267
Johnson, Dr. Samuel, 2, 7, 14, 89, 95, 140, 147, 165–166, 167, 174, 181, 183, 236, 366, 400
Johnson, Essay on, 188, 242, 244
Johnson, Life of (Boswell's), 244
Jolly Beggars, The, 157
Jones, Henry Arthur, 20, 342, 343
Jonson, Ben, 12, 58, 68, 74, 110, 111, 117, 170, 259, 384
Joseph Andrews, The History of, 176–177
Journalism, 162–164, 232
Journal of the Plague Year, 172
Juliana, 28
Julius Cæsar, 98, 323

Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, The, 277
Jungle-Book, The, 341
Jusserand, Jules, 169
Jutes, 24, 28
Juvenal, 96, 129, 147
Juvenilia (Tennyson's), 311

Kant, Immanuel, 138
Keats, John, 5, 16, 89, 119, 148, 188, 189, 190, 192, 199, 206, 216, 218–225, 232, 310, 314, 319, 383
Kendall, Henry Clarence, 19, 349
Kenilworth, 228, 229
Kennedy, Charles Rann, 20
Kersey's Dictionary, 149
Kidnapped, 271
King, Edmund, 116
King Henry IV, 81, 83, 88, 89, 95, 97
King Henry V, 81, 83, 88, 96
King Henry VI, 81, 82, 90, 97
King Henry VIII, 50, 81, 83, 106
King Johan, 11, 73
King John, 81, 82, 91
King John, The Troublesome Raigne of, 74
King Lear, 81, 83, 98, 100, 104, 228, 237
King Richard II, 81, 83, 92
King Richard III, 81, 83, 91, 92
King of the Dark Chamber, The, 19, 349
King of the Golden River, The, 292
King's Quair, The, 10, 45
King Solomon of Kentucky, 21
King's Threshold, The, 20
King's Tragedy, The, 301
Kingsley, Charles, 18, 258, 267–269
Kingsley, Henry, 18, 275, 276, 349
Kipling, Rudyard, 2, 20, 338, 339, 341, 347–348, 395
Klein, Charles, 346
Knickerbocker History of New York, 55, 247
Knight, Charles, 232
Kubla Khan, 192, 193
Kyd, Thomas, 12, 75, 76, 82

La Belle Dame Sans Merci, 223, 224
Lady from the Sea, The, 360
Lady of the Aroostook, The, 275
Lady of Lyons, The, 330
Lady of Shalott, The, 311, 312
Lady of the Lake, The, 203, 204
Lady or the Tiger, The, 19, 277
L'Aiglon, 323
Lalla Rookh, 233
L'Allegro, 115
Lament, A, 212
Lamia, 223
Lamb, Charles, 16, 92, 158, 235–238, 239, 402
Lamb, Mary, 236
Lancelot and Elaine, 317
Landon, Letitia E., 16, 233
Landor, Walter Savage, 4, 16, 116, 197, 204, 205, 234, 240
Langland, William, 10, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 92
Lanier, Sidney, 19, 297, 299
La Princess de Cleves, 133
Lara, 208
L'Art Poetique, 142
La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West, 256
Last Days of Pompeii, The, 16
Last Confession, A, 301
Last Leaf, The, 248
Last of the Barons, The, 91, 244
Last Ride Together, The, 325
Last Tournament, 317
Late Massacre in Piedmont, The, 383
Laureates, 346
Lavengro, 258
Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, 11, 57, 114
Layamon, 10, 31, 32
Lay of the Last Minstrel, 189, 203, 204
Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews, 296
Lays of Ancient Rome, 297
Leacock, Stephen, 21, 341
Lead, Kindly Light, 288, 381
Leather-Stocking Tales, 247
Leaves from an Australian Forest, 19
Lectures on Art, 291
Lectures on English Poets, 239
Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, 239
Legend of Good Women, 41
Legend of Sleepy Hollow, The, 247
Legend of Montrose, The, 228
Lenore, Translation, 203
Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim, 128
Letters on a Regicide Peace, 167
Letters (Lamb's), 236
Letters, 398–404
Leviathan, 13, 131
Lewis, Matthew Gregory, 14, 180, 245

Liberty, 284
Life and Death of Jason, The, 299
Life and Death of Mr. Badman, 132
Life of Byron, 16
Life of David Hume, 18, 296
Life of Nelson, 16, 232
Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D., 14, 183
Life of Sir Walter Scott, 16
Life of the Fields, The, 18, 286
Ligeia, 17, 277
Light of Asia, The, 19, 348
Light of the World, The, 348
Lincoln, Abraham, 311, 400
Lines on the Euganean Hills, 214
Lines to a Waterfowl, 247
Little Minister, The, 20
Little Novels of Italy, 341
Lives of the Poets, 166
Lives of the Saints, 10
Livy, 102
Lochiel, 233
Locksley Hall, 312, 313
Locke, John, 13, 56, 131–132, 191, 212
Locke, W. J., 20, 339
Lockhart, John G., 16, 156, 231, 232
Lodge, Thomas, 12, 75, 76
Lodging for the Night, A, 276
Logic, System of, 18
London, 140, 147
London Magazine, 235
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, 41, 44, 297
Looking-Glass for London, 76
Lord Jim, 20, 339
Lord of the Isles, The, 203
Lord Ullin's Daughter, 233
Lords and Lovers, 345
Lorna Doone, 17, 266
Lotus-Eaters, The, 311
Love, 192, 194
Love Among the Ruins, 324
Love and Duty, 312
Love for Love, 160
Love in Idleness, 297
Love in Old Cloathes, 18
Lover Waxeth Wiser, The, 12
Lover's Complaint, A, 84
Love's Labour's Lost, 59, 81, 82, 85, 86
Low Tide on Grand Pré, 21, 349
Lowell, James Russell, 19, 36, 56, 100, 218, 220, 294, 297, 299
Lucifer, 20, 347
Lucretius, 96
Luck of Roaring Camp, The, 277
Luther, Martin, 51
Lyall, Sir Alfred, 19, 348
Lycidas, 115, 116, 308, 382
Lydgate, John, 10, 57
Lyell, Sir Charles, 16, 234
Lyly, John, 12, 58, 59, 75, 76, 170
Lyric, 6, 8, 353, 379–386
Lyric Songs and Epigrams, 13
Lyrical Ballads, 141, 158–159, 192, 240
Lytell Gestes of Robin Hood, 32
Lytton, Bulwer, 16, 91, 244, 275, 276, 330

Macaulay, Thomas Babington, 6, 18, 188, 207, 210, 234, 242–244, 253, 254, 255, 278–281, 282, 284, 285, 290, 296, 297, 353
Macbeth, 81, 83, 98, 101, 237, 323
Machiavelli, 51
Machiavelli, Essay on, 188, 242, 243
Mackaye, Percy, 21
Macready, William Charles, 323
MacPherson, James, 14, 150
Madame D'Arblay, Essay on, 281
Madison, James, 15, 183
Madonna of the Future, The, 19
Madonna of the Peach-Tree, The, 20
Madras House, The, 20
Magna Charta, 92
Maid's Tragedy, The, 11
Malory, Sir Thomas, 5, 10, 31, 46, 247
Mandeville, Bernard, 14, 146
Manfred, 15, 189, 208, 210
Manners, Essay on, 294
Mansfield Park, 226
Manzoni, Alessandro, 227
Man Without a Country, The, 19, 277, 388
Man with the Hoe, The, 21
Marble Faun, The, 274, 376–378
Mariana, 311
Mariana in the South, 311
Marius the Epicurean, 18
Marjorie Daw, 18, 277
Markham, Edwin, 21, 350 357
Markheim, 276
Mark Twain, 2, 18, 45, 274, 277, 341
Marlowe, Christopher, 12, 68, 71, 75, 76–78, 86
Marmion, 203
Marryat, Captain Frederick, 16, 244
Marshes of Glynn, The, 299

Martin Chuzzlewit, 260
Marvell, Andrew, 13, 135
Masefield, John, 20, 79, 347
Masque of the Red Death, The, 277
Masques, 74, 111, 117
Massacre at Paris, The, 77
Massinger, Philip, 13, 110
Masson, David, 242
Master of Ballantrae, The, 271
Mater Dolorosa, 303
Maud, 310, 313, 315–317
"Maundeville, Sir John," 33, 211
May Queen, 26, 311
Mazzini, Giuseppe, 293
Measure for Measure, 81, 82, 83, 89
Meh Lady, 21
Melting-Pot, The, 20
Memoirs of a Cavalier, 170, 172
Menæchmi, 86
Men and Women, 326
Merchant of Venice, The, 80, 81, 82, 87
Meredith, George, 18, 258, 271–272, 273
Merope, A Tragedy, 308
Merry Men, The, 276
Merry Wives of Windsor, The, 81, 82, 88
Messiah, The, 144
"Metaphysical" Poets, 113, 125
Michael and his Lost Angel, 20
Microcosmographie, 13
Middle-English Literature, 3, 4, 10, 11, 30–47
Middlemarch, 263, 265
Middleton, Thomas, 13, 110
Midsummer Night's Dream, A, 81, 82, 86
Mill, John Stuart, 18, 284
Mill on the Floss, The, 17, 263, 264, 265, 266
Milman, Henry Hart, 16, 234, 235
Milton, John, 5, 6, 13, 18, 38, 65, 74, 76, 109, 110, 114–123, 130, 134, 168, 187, 199, 298, 305, 308, 310, 317, 319, 353, 355, 382, 383
Milton, Essay on, 188, 242, 279, 281
Minister's Charge, The, 275
Minister's Wooing, The, 274
Minstrel, The, 13, 151
Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, 203
Miracle Plays, 70
Mirror for Magistrates, The, 12, 44, 57
Miscellany of Uncertain Authors, 12
Misfortunes of Arthur, The, 73
Misfortunes of Elphin, The, 16, 246, 247
Mr. Isaacs, 21
Mr. Midshipman Easy, 16, 244, 270
Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist, 238
Mixed Essays, 285
Modern Instance, A, 275
Modern Painters, 18, 291
Molière, Jean B. P., 239
Moll Flanders, 172, 177
Monastery, The, 228, 229
Money, 330
Monna Innominata, 298
Montaigne, Michel E. de, 11, 56, 165, 366
Mont Blanc, 214
Montcalm and Wolfe, 19, 256
Moody, William Vaughan, 21, 346
Moonstone, The, 17, 267
Moore, George, 20, 338
Moore, Thomas, 16, 205, 232, 233–234
Moral Essays, 144
Moralities, 70
Morality-Tragedy, 69
More, Sir Thomas, 12, 50, 51, 180
Morley, Henry, 146
Morris, William, 18, 296, 297, 298, 300, 301
Morrison, Arthur, 20, 341
Morte d'Arthur, 10, 45, 312, 313
Moth and the Flame, The, 345
Mother Hubberd's Tale, 60, 61
Mother's Picture, Lines to, 151
Motley, John Lothrop, 19, 253, 256
Much Ado about Nothing, 81, 82, 89
Mummer's Wife, The, 20, 338
Municipal Report, A, 21
My Heart's in the Highlands, 157
My Last Duchess, 325
My Sister's Sleep, 301
Mysteries of Udolpho, The, 14, 180
Mystery Plays, 70

Nash, Thomas, 12, 75, 76, 170
Nathan Hale, 345
Natural History of Selbourne, 286
Naturalism, 337
Naturists, 338
New Decalogue, The, 298
New England Nun, A, 21
New Machiavelli, The, 20
New Poems, 308
New Testament, 12, 35, 52
New Way to Pay Old Debts, 13
Newcomes, The, 262

Newman, John Henry, 18, 286–288, 290, 381
Newton, Sir Isaac, 13, 130, 252
Nibelungenlied, 355
Nicholas Nickleby, 260
Nightmare Abbey, 245, 246, 247
Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality, 15, 147
Nineteenth Century Literature, A History of, 218
Noctes Ambrosianæ, 16
No Name, 267
Normans, 30, 31, 39
Norris, Frank, 21, 339, 340
North, Sir Thomas, 12, 56
North American Review, 247
Northanger Abbey, 226
North Shore Watch, The, 21
Norton, Thomas, 12, 57, 73
Novel, 6, 8, 168–181, 175, 225–231, 244–247, 257–275, 337–340, 353, 370–378
Novel in the Time of Shakespeare, The, 169
Noyes, Alfred, 20, 76, 224, 347
Nut-Brown Maid, The, 44

Oaten, Edward F., 348
Obermann Once More, 308
Oblation, The, 303
O'Brien, Fitz-James, 245
Observations on the Present State of the Nation, 167
O Captain, My Captain, 19
Ode, 381
Ode on a Grecian Urn, 16, 189, 223, 224
Ode on Intimations of Immortality (*See* Intimations), 16
Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington, 281
Ode to Duty, 202
Ode to Evening, 14, 148
Ode to Memory, 311
Ode to Milton, 123
Ode to a Nightingale, 223
Ode to the West Wind, 214, 216
Odyssey, 144
Œnone, 312
Old English Language, 30
Oft in the Stilly Night, 234
Old China, 238
Old Curiosity Shop, 260
Old English Scholars, 28–30
Old Ironsides, 248
Old Mortality, 227, 228, 229
Old Régime in Canada, The, 256
Old Testament, 29, 35
Old Town Folks, 274
Oliver Twist, 260
Old Swimmin' Hole, The, 21
Old Wives' Tale, The, 20, 76
Omar Khayyam, 17, 297
On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners, 294
On a Distant Prospect of Eton College, 148
On First Looking into Chapman's Homer, 56, 220
On Human Learning, 11
On Style, 14
One Act Plays, 364
One of Our Conquerors, 271
Oration, 9
Ordeal of Richard Feverel, The, 271, 272
Oregon Trail, The, 256
Origin of Species, The, 17, 295
Orlando Furioso, Translation, 11
Orm, 10, 34
Ormond; or the Secret Witness, 247
Ormulum, 10, 34
Osorio, 330
Ossian, 14, 150
Othello, 81, 83, 98, 100
Otway, Thomas, 13, 161
Our Brown Passenger, 276
Our Friend, The Charlatan, 20, 338
Our Ladies of Sorrow, 242
Our Mutual Friend, 259, 260
Outcasts of Poker Flat, The, 19, 277, 387
Overbury, Sir Thomas, 13, 112, 170
Oversoul, The, Essay on, 294
Ovid, 129
Owl and the Nightingale, The, 32
Oxford Reformers, 50, 51

Page, Thomas Nelson, 21, 339, 342
Pageants, 74
Paine, Thomas, 15, 183
Painter, William, 12, 57
Pair of Blue Eyes, A, 273
Palace of Art, 311, 312
Palace of Pleasure, The, 12, 57
Palmer, George H., 85
Pamela, 15, 175, 176
Paolo and Francesca, 20
Paracelsus, 320, 322, 323

Paradise Lost, 13, 64, 115, 118–120, 121, 122, 222, 317, 353, 355
Paradise of Dainty Devices, 56
Paradise Regained, 115, 120–121
Parker, Sir Gilbert, 21, 341
Parkman, Francis, 19, 253, 256
Parliament of Fowls, The, 41
Passionate Pilgrim, The, 84
Passions, The, 148
Past and Present, 281, 282
Pastorals, 143
Pater, Walter, 18, 155, 178, 240, 261, 288–290
Patmore, Coventry, 304
Patriot, The, 325
Pauline, 320, 322
Peacock, Thomas Love, 16, 213, 245–247
Pearl, 10, 32, 34
Peele, George, 12, 75, 76
Peg Woffington, 268
Pembroke, Lady, 384
Pendennis, 262
Pepacton, 21
Pepys, Samuel, 13, 134
Percy, Bishop, 14, 150, 202, 203
Père Goriot, 228
Pericles, Prince of Tyre, 80, 81, 83, 103, 104
Periodical literature, 162–166
Periods of English Literature, 1, 3, 4, 354
Perkin Warbeck, 75
Persuasion, 226
Petrarch, 41, 382
Peveril of the Peak, 228, 229
Pheidippides, 328
Phillips, Stephen, 20
Philosophy, 9, 131, 181
Philosophy of Composition, The, 387
Philosophy of Style, The, 295
Phœnix and the Turtle, The, 84
Phyllis for Shame, 13
Pickwick Papers, 188, 258, 260, 372
Pied Piper of Hamelin, The, 325
Piers Plowman, 10, 34, 35, 92
Pilgrim's Progress, The, 12, 32, 34, 132, 133, 170, 262, 317
Pilot, The, 247
Pinero, Sir Arthur, 20, 342, 343
Pinkney, Edward Coates, 248
Pioneers of France in the New World, 256
Pippa Passes, 17, 320, 323
Pirate, The, 228, 229
Pit, The, 21
Pit and the Pendulum, The, 277
Pitt, Essay on, 281
Plain Tales from the Hills, 341
Plato, 217
Plautus, 86
Playboy of the Western World, 343
Plays, in the United States, 349–350
Plays, List of, 363
Pleasures of Hope, 159, 233
Pleasures of Memory, 233
Pliny, 59, 212
Plutarch's Lives, Translation, 12, 56, 102
Poe, Edgar Allan, 17, 147, 241, 247, 248, 275, 277, 297, 299, 311, 387
Poems and Ballads, 303
"*Poems*," of Shakespeare, 84, 97
Poet at the Breakfast-Table, The, 274
Poetics, 93
Poetry of Architecture, The, 291
Poet's Song, The, 312
Political Economy, 284
Political History of the Devil, The, 183
Pope, Alexander, 5, 14, 140, 141, 142, 143–145, 147, 150, 153, 159, 163, 164, 181, 207, 306
Porphyria's Lover, 325
Porter, Jane, 16, 244
Porter, William Sidney, 21, 342
Portrait of a Lady, The, 275
Pot of Broth, The, 343
Potter's Thumb, The, 19, 348
Prelude, The, 201, 202
Pre-Raphaelites, 298, 300, 301
Prescott, William Hickling, 19, 253, 256
Present-Day Literature, 3, 5, 20, 336–352, 354
Pride and Prejudice, 15, 226
Prince, The, 51
Princess, The, 310, 312, 313, 314
Princess Casamissima, The, 275
Principia, 13, 130
Principles of Geology, 16, 234
Principles of Psychology, 295
Principles of Sociology, 18
Prisoner of Chillon, The, 208
Progress of Romance, 175
Prometheus Unbound, 16, 189, 214, 216
Prospice, 327
Prothalamion, 62
Punch, 291
Purchas, Samuel, 68
Puritan Movement, 109

Puritans, 57, 114, 117
Purvey, John, 11, 35
Put Yourself in his Place, 268
Pye, Henry James, 346, 347
Pygmalion and Galatea, 17

Quarles, Francis, 13, 113
Quarterly Review, 232
Queen Mab, 213
Queen Mary, 318, 330
Queen-Mother, The, 302
Quentin Durward, 227, 228, 229
Questions and Topics for Discussion, 22, 45, 106, 136, 184, 242, 249, 331–332, 350–351, 358, 364–365, 369, 375–376, 376–378, 384–385, 393–394

Rab and his Friends, 17, 276
Rabbi Ben Ezra, 327
Rabelais, 96, 239
Radcliffe, Mrs. Ann, 14, 180, 204, 245
Raleigh, Sir Walter, 12, 53, 55, 61, 65, 118.
Ralph Roister Doister, 12, 72
Rambler, 166
Ramsay, Allan, 15, 145
Ranke, Essay on, 281
Rape of Lucrece, The, 84
Rape of the Lock, The, 14, 143, 314
Rasselas, 14, 174
Reade, Charles, 18, 258, 267–269
Reader, 163
Reading Lists, 46, 107, 136, 184–186, 249–250, 333–335, 351–352, 374–375
Realists, 338
Recessional, The, 348
Recollection, 214
Recollections of the Arabian Nights, 311
Recruiting Officer, The, 14, 160
Red Cotton Night-Cap Country, or Turf and Towers, 320
Redgauntlet, 229, 230
Reeve, Mrs. Clara, 175, 257
Reflections, 142
Reflections on the French Revolution, 14, 167, 183
Reflective Lyric, 381
Reformation, The, 51
Religio Laici, 128
Religio Medici, 12, 114
Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, 14, 150, 202, 203
Remorse, 330
Renaissance, The, 11, 40, 48, 66, 69
Renaissance Literature, 3, 4, 48–108, 354
Requiem, 270
Requiescat, 307
Resolution and Independence, 202
Return of the Native, The, 18, 273
Revenge, The, 318
Reverie, 328–329
Review, 162
Revolt of Islam, 214
Reynolds, Sir Joshua, 15, 143, 237
Rhoda Fleming, 271
Rice, Cale Young, 350
Richardson, Samuel, 15, 132, 133, 170, 174, 175–176, 330
Riders to the Sea, 20, 343
Rienzi, 244
Right of Way, The, 21
Rights of Man, The, 15, 183
Riley, James Whitcomb, 21, 350
Ring and the Book, The, 320, 323, 327–328
Rip Van Winkle, 17, 247
Rise of the Dutch Republic, The, 19, 256
Rise of Silas Lapham, The, 19, 275
Rival Ladies, The, 125
Rivals, The, 15, 161
Rizpah, 318
Robert of Gloucester, 33
Roberts, Charles G. D., 21, 349
Robertson, Thomas W., 18, 330
Robertson, William, 15, 166, 182
Robin Hood, 75
Robin Hood Ballads, 44
Robinson Crusoe, 14, 170, 172
Rob Roy, 227, 228
Rochester, Earl of, 13, 135
Roderick Random, 15
Roderick, the Last of the Goths, 204, 232
Rogers, Samuel, 16, 207, 233
Rokeby, 203
Romance, 189
Romance and Reality, 86
Romance of the Rose, 40
Romances, 103, 356, 357
Romances of Shakespeare, 83
Romanticism, 153, 156, 190–192, 205
Romanticists, 338–339
Romans in Britain, 23, 25
Romany Rye, The, 258
Romeo and Juliet, 81, 97, 228
Romola, 263–264

Rosalynd : A Novel, 12
Rose Mary, 301
Rossetti, Christina G., 18, 296, 297, 300, 304, 314, 383
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, 18, 199, 298, 300, 301–302, 383
Rostand, Edmond, 323
Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 179, 180
Rowe, Nicholas, 161
Rowley Poems, 14, 149
Royal Society of London, 130
Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, 297
Rugby Chapel, 308
Ruskin, John, 18, 36, 57, 114, 163, 194, 260, 284, 290–293, 300, 308, 353
Russell, Lady Rachel, 148
Russian Literature, 273, 277

Sackville, Thomas, 12, 57, 73
Sacred Poems, 13
Sad Shepherd, The, 111
St. Agnes' Eve, 312
St. John, 96
St. Paul, 96
St. Ronan's Well, 229
Saintsbury, George, 125, 168, 212, 218, 242
Saints' Everlasting Rest, 12, 114
Samson Agonistes, 115, 121–122
Sandra Belloni, 271
Sanity of True Greatness, 238
Saratoga, 344
Sartor Resartus, 281, 282, 283
Satires (Donne's), 13
Satires (Marvell's), 13
Savile, George, 238
Saxons, 23, 25
"Scandalous Club," 162
Scarecrow, The, 21
Scarlet Letter, The, 19, 274, 275
Scenes of Clerical Life, 263
Scherer, Edmond, 263
Schlegel, Augustus Wilhelm, 239
Scholar Gipsy, The, 307
School for Scandal, 161
School of Terror, 180
Schopenhauer, Arthur, 239, 273
Schreiner, Mrs. Olive, 21, 341
Science, 9, 130, 252, 295–296
Scott, Sir Walter, 16, 181, 188, 189, 190, 192, 194, 202–204, 205, 210, 225, 232, 226–231, 240, 247, 269, 290
Scottish Chiefs, 16, 244
Sea Fairies, The, 311
Seasons, The, 15, 145, 149
Self-Reliance, Essay on, 294
Seneca, 73
Sense and Sensibility, 226
Sensitive Plant, The, 214
Sentimental Journey through France and Italy, A, 179, 180
Separation, 308
Servant in the House, The, 20
Sesame and Lilies, 292
Seven Lamps of Architecture, The, 291
Seventeenth Century Literature, 3, 4, 14, 109–137
Shaftesbury, Earl of, 15, 181
Shakespeare, William, 4, 12, 38, 57, 59, 62, 67, 69, 71, 73, 74, 78–106, 153, 156, 162, 164, 165, 170, 179, 187, 199, 215, 228, 234, 236, 237, 239, 259, 262, 272, 304, 319, 321, 323, 359, 383
Shakespeare Once More, 100
Shakespeare's successors, 110
Shaw, George Bernard, 20, 342, 343
Shelley, Miss, 212
Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 5, 16, 187, 188, 190, 192, 196, 205, 211–217, 218, 232, 234, 245, 246, 290, 298, 308, 310, 319, 330, 382, 383
Shenandoah, 344
Shepherd, The, 345
Shepherd's Calendar, 60
Sheridan, Richard, 15, 160, 161
She Stoops to Conquer, 161
She was a Phantom of Delight, 202
Shirley, 258
Shortest Way with the Dissenters, 162
Shorthouse, Joseph Henry, 18, 254, 258, 267
Short History of the English People, A, 255
Short-story, 6, 8, 275–278, 340–342, 353, 386–394
Sidney, Sir Philip, 12, 55, 59, 60, 65, 73, 170, 384
Signal Man, The, 276
Sigurd the Volsung, 299
Silas Marner, 263, 265
Silent Woman, The, 111
Sinclair, May, 181, 339
Sir Charles Grandison, 175
Sire de Maletroit's Door, The, 276
Siris, 14

Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere, 312
Sir Thomas More (A Play), 75
Sisterly Scheme, A, 277
Sketch-Book, 247
Sketches by Boz, 188
Smith, Adam, 15, 181, 182
Smollett, Tobias, 15, 175, 178–179, 259, 262
Snow-Bound, 19
Sohrab and Rustum, 307, 309
Soldiers Three, 341
Solitary Reaper, The, 202
Songs Before Sunrise, 303
Song for St. Cecilia's Day, 128
Songs of Experience, 157, 158
Songs of Innocence, 14, 157, 158
Song of the English, A, 348
Song of the Shirt, The, 16, 233
Sonnet, 382–383
Sonnets from the Portuguese, 17, 304
Sonnets (Howard's), 12
Sonnets, of Shakespeare, 84, 85
Sophocles, 39
Soul's Tragedy, A, 320, 325
South African Literature, 2, 21, 341
Southey, Robert, 16, 158, 196, 197, 204, 205, 213, 232, 234, 241, 346
Southey, Essay on, 281
Spanish Friar, The, 127
Spanish Gipsy, The, 330
Spanish Tragedy, 12, 82
Specimens of English Dramatists Contemporary with Shakespeare, 237
Spectator, 14, 163
Spectre Bridegroom, The, 247
Spencer, Herbert, 18, 295, 299
Spenser, Edmund, 4, 6, 10, 12, 38, 53, 60–66, 68, 130, 213, 211
Spinster, 163
"*Splendour falls on castle walls, The*," 314
Spy, The, 17, 247
Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse, 308
State Papers (Washington's), 15
Stedman, Edmund Clarence, 244, 254
Steele, Mrs. F. A., 19, 348
Steele, Sir Richard, 15, 162, 163, 164, 166
Stepping Westward, 201
Sterne, Laurence, 15, 175, 179–180
Stevenson, Robert Louis, 18, 258, 269–271, 272, 275, 276–277, 293
Stockton, Frank R., 19, 275, 277
Stones of Venice, 291
Stories of and for Children, 392
Storm, Theodor, 277
Story of My Heart, The, 286
Story of Rimini, 233
Story-Telling Poems, 357
Stothard, Thomas, 158
Stowe, Mrs. Harriet Beecher, 19, 274
Strafford, 320, 323, 331
Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, 276
Stray Pleasures, 202
Strayed Reveller and Other Poems, The, 306
Strife, 20
Stubbornness of Geraldine, The, 345
Studies in the History of the Renaissance, 290
Style, List of Essays upon, 398
Style, On, 14
Subjection of Women, The, 284
Summary View of Greek Literature, 241
Sun, New York, 336
Superannuated Man, The, 238
Surgeon's Daughter, The, 229, 230
Surrey, Earl of, 12, 73
Sutro, Alfred, 20, 343
"*Sweet and low*," 314
Swift, Jonathan, 15, 160, 164–165, 166, 167, 170, 173–174, 179
Swinburne, Algernon Charles, 18, 199, 296, 298, 300, 302–303, 308, 330, 382, 383
Sybil, 257
Symonds, John Addington, 215
Synge, John Millington, 20, 343
Synthetic Philosophy, 295
System of Logic, 284

Table of Authors, 10–21
Tacitus, 27, 96
Tagore, Rabindranath, 19, 349
Taine, Hippolyte Adolphe, 261, 279
Tale of a Tub, The, 165
Tale of Two Cities, A, 259, 260
Tales, 356
Tales from Shakespeare, 236
Tales of a Wayside Inn, 41
Tales of the Mermaid Inn, 20, 75, 224, 347
Tales of Mean Streets, 20, 341
Tales of Unrest, 341
Taliesin : A Masque, 21
Talisman, The, 229, 230

Tamburlaine, 77
Taming of the Shrew, The, 81, 82, 87
Tam o' Shanter, 157
Task, The, 14, 151, 152
Tasso, Translation, 11, 56
Tatler, 162, 165
Taxation no Tyranny, 167
Taylor, Jeremy, 13, 114
"*Tears, Idle Tears*," 314
Tea-Table, The, 145
Tempest, The, 74, 80, 81, 82, 83, 104, 106, 360
Temple, The, 13, 113
Temple, Sir William, 13, 134
Tennessee's Partner, 277
Tennyson, 6, 31, 44, 45, 53, 123, 187, 203, 247, 296, 298, 300, 306, 308, 309–319, 320, 330, 331, 346, 355, 381, 382
Terribly Strange Bed, A, 276
Tess of the D'Urbervilles, 273
Thackeray, William Makepeace, 6, 164, 178, 231, 258, 261–263, 266, 271, 275, 276, 338
Thaddeus of Warsaw, 244
Thanatopsis, 16, 247
Theater, The Modern, 362
Theatre, 163
Their Wedding Journey, 275
Theory of Light, 130
They, 341
Thomas, Augustus, 346
Thompson, Francis, 20
Thomson, James, 15, 145, 148, 149, 159
Thoreau, Henry David, 19, 286, 294
Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents, 167
Threnody, 382
Threnody, 382
Thyrsis, 308, 382
Timon of Athens, 80, 81, 83, 98, 103
Tintern Abbey, Lines Written Above, 159
Titus Andronicus, 81, 97, 98, 103
To a Sky-Lark, 200, 214, 216
Tolstoi, Leo, 98, 227
To Mary in Heaven, 157
Tom Brown at Oxford, 266
Tom Brown's School-Days, 266
Tom Jones, a Foundling, The History of, 177, 178, 231, 262
Topics for Advanced Study, 404–408
Tottel, Richard, 12, 53
Tottel's Miscellany, 53, 56
Toussaint L'Ouverture, 198
Toxophilus, or the School of Shooting, 11
Tractate on Education, 115, 118
Tragedies of Shakespeare (Lamb's), 237
Tragedy, 72, 359
Tragic Comedians, The, 271
Travels of Sir John Maundeville, 33
Treasure Island, 18, 270, 271
Treatise of Human Nature, 182
Trench, Archbishop, 312
Tristam and Iseult, 307
Tristram Shandy, Gent., Life and Opinions of, 15, 179
Triumph of Life, The, 214, 216, 217
Troilus and Cressida, 80, 81, 83, 103
Troilus and Criseyde, 40
Trollope, Anthony, 18, 258, 267
Troublesome Raigne of King John, The, 74
True-born Englishman, 138, 140, 245
Truth, The, 345
Turner, J. M. W., 233
Twa Corbies, 32
Twelfth Night, or What You Will, 81, 82, 89, 97
Twice-Told Tales, 248
Two Drovers, The, 229, 230
Two Gentlemen of Verona, The, 81, 82, 86
Two Noble Kinsmen, The, 11, 82
Two Voices, The, 311
Two Worlds, 21
Tyndale, William, 12, 30, 52
Tyndall, John, 18, 295
Types of Literature, 4, 5–9, 353–408

Udall, Nicholas, 12, 68, 72
Ulysses, 312, 313
Uncle Tom's Cabin, 19, 274
Uncle Remus; His Songs and His Sayings, 21
Unto this Last, 292
Upon Westminster Bridge, 200
Utopia, 12, 51

Vanity Fair, 18, 261, 262
Vanity of Human Wishes, The, 147
Vathek, History of the Caliph, 14, 180
Vaughan, Henry, 13, 113
Venice Preserved, 13, 161
Venus and Adonis, 84
Verists, 338
Verses Written in India, 348
Vestiges of Creation, 15

Vicar of Wakefield, The, 14, 174
Vice, The, 71, 72
Victorian Age in Literature, 3, 5, 17, 252–335, 355
View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages, 235
View of the State of Ireland, dialogue-wise, A, 63
Villette, 258
Virgil, 143, 144, 320, 355
Virginian, The, 21
Virginians, The, 261, 262
Virginibus Puerisque, 293
Vision of Don Roderick, The, 204
Vision of Judgment, 210
Vision of Sin, The, 312, 313
Vittoria, 271
Volpone the Fox, 12, 111
Voltaire, François Marie Arouet, 245
Voyage of Maeldune, The, 318
Vulgate, 10

Wace, 11, 31
Walden, or Life in the Wood, 19, 294
Wallace, Alfred Russell, 18, 295
Wallenstein, Translation, 192
Waller, Edmund, 13, 134
Walpole, Horace, 15, 180, 205, 245
Wandering Willie's Tale, 230
Ward, Mrs. Humphry, 20, 349
Washington, George, 15, 183
Watson, William, 20
Wat Tyler, 158
Waverley, 203, 227, 228, 229
Way of All Flesh, The, 135
Way of the World, The, 14, 160
Wealth of Nations, The, 15, 162
We are Seven, 159, 198
Webster, Daniel, 6
Webster, John, 13, 79, 110
Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers, 294
Weir of Hermiston, 271
Well of the Saints, The, 343
Wells, H. G., 20, 339
Wesleyan Movement, 151
Westminster Abbey, 308
Westminster Bridge, Upon, 200
Westward Ho! 269
Wharton, Mrs. Edith, 21, 339
Whately, Richard, 16, 241
What Was It; A Mystery, 245
When Ghost Meets Ghost, 339
Whistler, J. M., 290
White, Gilbert, 286
White, William A., 339
White Devil, The, 111
White Doe of Rylstone, The, 202
White Old Maid, The, 277
Whitman, Walt, 19, 297
Whittier, John Greenleaf, 19, 297, 299
Widow in the Bye Street, 347
Widsith, 25
Wieland; or The Transformation, 247
Wiggin, Kate Douglas, 339
Will o' the Mill, 276
Will Summer's Testament, 12, 76
Will Waterproof's Monologue, 312
Wilmot, John, 13
Wilson, John, 16, 232
Wind in the Willows, 255
Windsor Forest, 144
Winter's Tale, The, 80, 81, 83, 105
Wister, Owen, 21, 339
Wit and Humour, 240
Witch, The, 111
Without Benefit of Clergy, 341
Witty Characters, 13
Woman in White, The, 267
Women Beware Women, 111
Wonderful Century, The, 18, 295
Woodberry, George Edward, 21, 350
Woodman, The, 293
Woodspurge, The, 301
Woodstock, 229, 230
Wordsworth, Essay on, 308
Wordsworth, William, 5, 10, 16, 141, 150, 155, 158, 159, 168, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 196, 197–202, 203, 205, 206, 210, 213, 218, 226, 232, 240, 241, 273, 290, 292, 305, 306, 310, 319, 346, 381, 383, 402
Workhouse Ward, The, 20
Worthies of England, 13, 114
Wyatt, Sir Thomas (Elder), 53
Wyatt, Sir Thomas (Younger), 12, 53, 73
Wycliffe, John, 11, 30, 32, 35, 38

Yeast, 268
Yeats, William B., 2, 20, 343
Ye Mariners of England, 15, 233
Young, Edward, 15, 147

Zangwill, Israel, 20
Zapolya, 330

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